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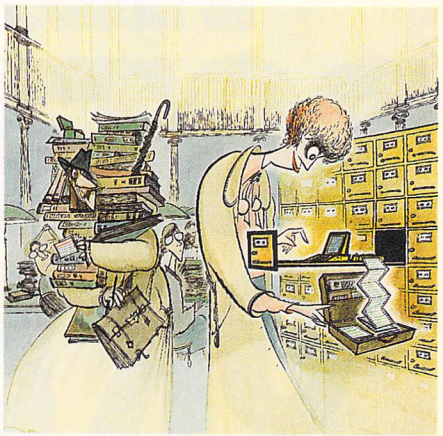

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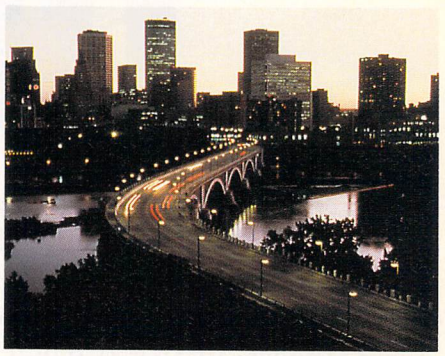

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Too Hot to Print

Catch computer industry news as it happens, keep up with online events, read special reports, commentary and more product reviews. You'll find it only in *Online Today Daily Edition*, a daily-updated newspaper full of information that's too hot to print. GO OLT.

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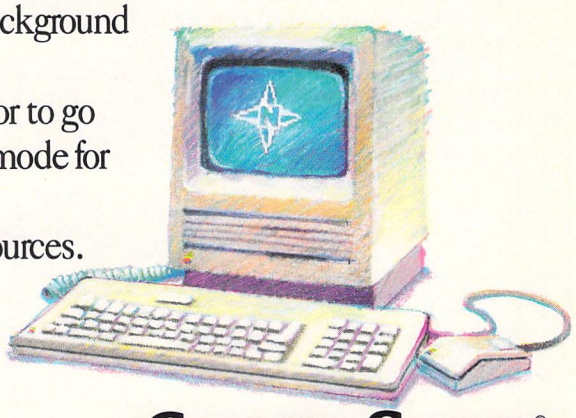

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DEAR READER

If you've ever written a major research paper, you know how time consuming and frustrating the research part can be. A real research effort used to mean hours and hours of prowling dark, fetid library bookstacks; thumbing through piles of musty magazines and journals, and plugging the poor-quality copier with countless dimes—if you were so lucky to have the proper change. Even after all the searching, it was never certain you would find what you were seeking. We all remember the agony of missing pages, clipped articles and publications that were "checked out" or lost forever to that Main Library in the sky. "Re-searching" was the perfect word for all of this, because that's exactly what you did—many times over.

Now is the time to learn how to do searching without researching. You can swear off wasted hours, out-of-date publications and vending machine coffee forever. Let *Online Today* show you how to do most all your information-seeking chores online—from your home or office—in this month's cover feature beginning on page 20.

Contributing Editor Cathryn Conroy will lead you through four search examples using several of CompuServe's more than 900 powerful research databases. Whether you're doing the time-honored research paper, looking up census and demographic data to start a new business or simply fact-finding, the examples will outline a plan of attack. Generously sprinkled throughout are tips on how to make your search easier and more efficient.

Finally, if you're unsure where to begin with 900 databases, turn to page 26 where you'll find a feature on SmartSCAN, a search simplifier. SmartSCAN helps you locate and tap all relevant databases in one easy search process.

* * *

Here's a new section in *Online Today* you'll want to check every month: it's the new "Update" section. Although it's on the last page of the magazine, it's first in news. Here you'll find "last minute" news about the CompuServe Information Service—information that goes into the magazine in as little as a month before press time. For the very latest, be sure to read *Online Today Daily Edition* on CompuServe (GO OLT).

Another new section, "At Your Service" (page 40) features CompuServe Customer Service information, a system-wide Q&A column and online shopping highlights when *Go Mall* does not publish.

* * *

We're pleased to announce that *Online Today* now has its own forum on the CompuServe Information Service. It's the *Online Today* Readers' Forum and it's your opportunity to interact with *OLT* writers and editors, ask questions about *OLT* articles, and find out how to use CompuServe more effectively. We also have a keyword search data library filled with two years worth of *OLT* software and hardware reviews, and another data library with GIF pictures of sample screens to accompany them.

You'll also find Charles Bowen and Dave Peyton—authors of *How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe* (Bantam Books)—who now call the *OLT* Readers' Forum home and maintain a section called "HTGTMOOC" on the discussion board.

Get online, GO OLTFORUM, and stop by to say hello.

Douglas G. Branstetter
Editor

ONLINE TODAY

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Volume 7 Number 4

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LETTERS

Coverage of CP/M

I like my Kaypro 4 CP/M computer, Epson RX-80 printer, Novation J-Cat modem and Mite modem software. All serve my needs well. Therefore, you will understand why it is disappointing to find nothing on the newsstands or in local computer stores and very little about CP/M in *Online Today*.

I do appreciate the online availability of the Kaypro, Epson, MicroPro and similar forums. I believe there are thousands of CP/M users and we represent a viable market with an interest in new and old CP/M software, publications and information. I wish *Online Today* would give us more coverage.

John R. Doser
Fairport, N.Y.

Coverage of Non-IBM Computers

I must agree with Logan Rothstein and Kevin Hudson, who expressed their concern in the February issue about the lack of software reviews for non-IBM-compatible computers.

In the same issue, there are six reviews and all are for IBM or IBM-compatible computers. I realize that IBM has the lion's share of the computer market, but not 100 percent. I am an Apple owner.

Raymond Bullock
Troy, Mich.

Editor's Note: The abundance of IBM and IBM-compatible software reviews and the shortage of other reviews does not reflect any deliberate slanting or emphasis by Online Today. *Reviewers are assigned to cover non-IBM material, but reviews published reflect the number of products submitted by manufacturers and vendors.*

Recently we have been covering Macintosh, Commodore 64/128 and Amiga products more frequently as more products for these machines become available.

Finally, be sure to read more reviews in Online Today Daily Edition (GO OLT) *each month.*

Comments on *Online Today*

I really think your periodical is great. It's the best I've ever read.

Chetan Rao
Ramsey, N.J.

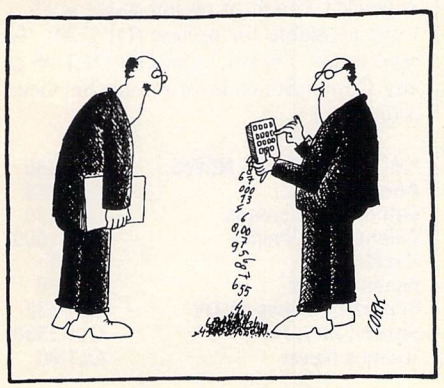
This is just a note to compliment the reviews section. I have read several reviews by Hardin Brothers on products I am familiar with. The reviews have been well-written and factual. I would like to see more.

David Harnish
Chicago, Ill.

Corrections

In "Beyond the Facts: McGraw-Hill News" (Feb. issue, p.10), the surcharge for McGraw-Hill News was incorrectly listed as $27.50 per connect hour. Access to McGraw-Hill News costs a *total* of $27.50 per connect hour, of which $15 is the standard Executive News Service surcharge.

In "Ask Customer Service" (Feb. issue, p. 32), there was incorrect information in the answer to the question "What has happened when I get the message 'Enter Control-Q to continue?'." The erroneous statement is that your charges stop accruing at the moment you receive the message beginning "%NTW."



Send a Letter

OLT-30 **Letters to the Editor** *main menu. Lists all departments.*

OLT-31 **Send a letter instructions.** *Complete instructions on how to send a letter to the editor via the electronic service.*

OLT-32 **Read letters** *from other OLT readers.*

OLT-33 **Send a letter** *to the editor. You will receive prompts for each step in the process. Important Note: We cannot answer questions regarding the CompuServe Information Service through this service. If you have questions or problems, please use the Feedback service (GO FEEDBACK).*

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Collegiate Pen Pals

You can learn facts about a college —such as admissions policies, academic requirements and sports programs—by simply consulting its catalog. But what about questions on dorm life, fraternities and sororities, and the amount of studying required? The best source for these answers is a student. The Students' Forum offers a way of linking high school and college students for this question-and-answer exchange.

Organized by Forum Administrator Dave Winslow, the forum provides an opportunity for "electronic pen pals" to share information on colleges. Students ask questions formally through organized conferences and informally through private and public messages left on the forum bulletin board.

The most common questions asked by high school students, according to participants, are about the student population, the ratio of students to teachers, how difficult it is to be admitted, the degree of difficulty in classes, location of student hangouts and the general attitude on campus.

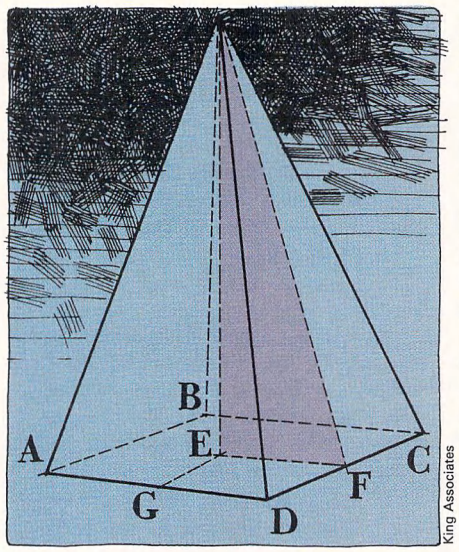
"Certain intangibles are not available from any book or catalog," says Isaac Matarasso, a junior at UCLA. "In the same way that a student plans a visit to the college or university before the decision is made to go there, a chat with a student can provide this type of intangible information."

Stanford University junior Matt E. C. McConnell says this electronic exchange offers a personal touch to the information given. "You're dealing with an old-hand who knows about that particular college. It is as if the prospective student actually came to the university and was given a personal tour. Through an electronic tour, however, you save the time and expense of traveling."

Brian Jay, a student at LaSalle College High School in Wyndmoor, Pa., agrees. He has been able to talk to students from schools that he would never have been able to visit in person. Jay explains, "I have found it helpful and easier to obtain information online. For me, the most important thing has been the ability to talk directly to students."

For information on this program, contact Winslow in the Students' Forum (GO STUFO) on CompuServe.

—Cathryn Conroy



King Associates

Geometric Models Take Shape Online

For the first time, leading mathematicians in the United States and Europe are combining the power of a supercomputer with that of a high-speed telecommunications network to focus on solving some of the most challenging problems in geometry research.

Made possible by a $1.5 million grant to the University of Minnesota from the National Science Foundation, the Geometry Supercomputer Project will enable 13 mathematicians in England, France and at eight US institutions to work together to develop highly sophisticated computer software and to share programming ideas. The project also will integrate 3-D displays and animation into computer programs to aid visualization.

The ability to "see" ideas always has played a big role in mathematical thinking, says project organizer Al Marden of the University of Minnesota. Every high schooler learns geometry by drawing pictures of lines and triangles. But even at the most advanced levels, looking at pictures remains a great help in understanding complicated geometric structures, he notes.

In high school, pen and paper usually work well enough, but the project's mathematicians will be looking at structures impossible to draw by hand. "We will be seeing things that have never been seen before. And then, of course, we must try to find the scientific theory that explains what we are seeing," says Marden.

Specifically, the group will compile a catalog describing different kinds of three-dimensional spaces, or manifolds—the inside of a sphere, the inside of a doughnut or the space around a loosely knotted string, for example.

Another area of emphasis will be fractal geometry. Benoit Mandelbrot, who founded the subject, will participate in the project. Mandelbrot's fractal landscapes and abstract designs have been widely publicized, and his work has led to applications ranging from cinematography to physics.

Although the Geometry Supercomputer Project is designed to help mathematicians discover basic principles, the information uncovered by the research may also prove applicable to other sciences. In addition, the new approaches to computer programming that project members will use to study geometry may stimulate advances in computer science, and may have engineering applications as well.

The workstations of the US mathematicians will be linked through the National Science Foundation's NSFNET, which transmits information at 56,000 bits per second, much faster than data sent through ordinary phone lines. The foundation plans to upgrade NSFNET later this year, raising transmission speed to 1.5 million bits per second.

Further information on the project is available from the National Science Foundation; 202/357-9498.

—John Edwards

Get Computer Industry News

Online Today Daily Edition's Monitor section keeps you abreast of the latest computer and information industry news. Stories are added several times each day and the hot items are highlighted on our front page, OLT-1. A week's worth of recent news is always available for review (OLT-20). To read today's news, type GO OLT-90 at any CompuServe Information Service prompt.

***MONITOR DAILY NEWS**	**OLT-160**
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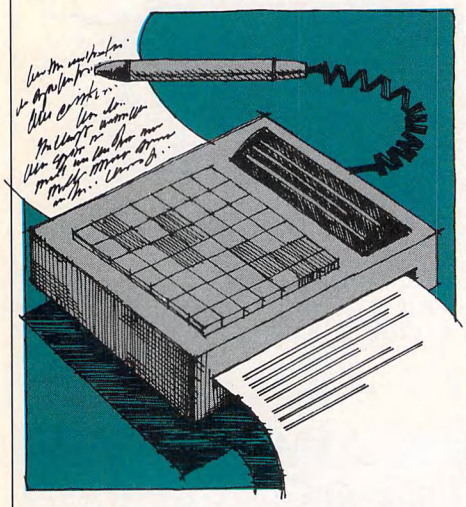
Behind the Screens	**OLT-130**
Calendar of Events	**OLT-1000**
Headlines	**OLT-1**
Recent News	**OLT-20**
Reporting News to Us	**OLT-352**
Special Reports	**OLT-2000**
Today's News	**OLT-90**

Unscrambling Scrawl

Have you ever received a handwritten message scrawled so miserably that you needed a computer to decipher it?

Until recently, computers didn't fare much better than humans when it came to unscrambling poor penmanship. But now, Nestor Inc., a Providence, R.I.-based company, has developed an electronic clipboard that translates most handwriting into computer-readable data.



The NestorWriter uses a patented technology developed in the early 1970s by the two Brown University physics professors who founded the company. The device's translating technology, which uses artificial intelligence techniques, has received attention from companies recognizing its potential for translating illegible scrawl, such as in prescription forms.

"There is nothing on the market like this, and we did exhaustive research. It's unique," says Mike Buffa, the company president. "The artificial intelligence of the machine enables it to store and recall characteristics of a person's handwriting."

The product, which is undergoing beta testing at several firms in the United States and abroad, measures 14-inches square and one-inch thick—about the size of a laptop computer. A special pen is attached to the board with a tether. Also included are a modem for communication with any IBM computer and a "smart card" for information storage. Each NestorWriter clipboard is expected to retail for about $2,500.

Complete details are available from Nestor at 401/331-9640.

—John Edwards

A Quarter-Century of Computer Games

My, how time flies when you're having fun. This year, computer games mark their 25th anniversary.

For the record, the first interactive computer game was the brainchild of three members of the model railroad club at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Stephen "Slug" Russell, Alan Kotok and Martin "Shag" Graetz, inspired by NASA's space missions, decided to simulate a space game on the school's PDP-1 computer, the ancestor of the PDP-10 used to run CompuServe games today. The result was *Spacewar!*

Compared with recent simulations, the first computer game's concept was ridiculously simple: Viewing a crude image of a wall with a hole in it, the player's only aim was to get a computer-generated ball into the hole.

At a recent celebration honoring *Spacewar!*, held at the Boston Computer Museum, Russell reminisced about his brainchild. "You'd roll the ball off the top of the wall, and it bounced twice off the screen," said Russell, who now works for Hasbro Electronics. "You could calculate everything involved. It was completely artificial, quite a wonder."

Graetz, now a computer technical writer, is unsure about the future of computer games. "There'll never be a time when people aren't interested in playing a game," he said, but he added that people tired quickly of the computer games played on television screens.

"It was fun for awhile, but those games had limitations, and people discovered that they got boring," he said. "Improvement in technology makes games more interesting, and that's happening. Now, in homes, you're seeing the kind of games you'd put quarters into if they weren't in the home."

Outer Limits

Should the United States sponsor manned spaceflights beyond Earth's orbit?

Three mechanical engineering students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute spent seven weeks last fall at NASA's Washington, D.C., headquarters trying to determine the rationale for manned space exploration. To determine this, Brian Pothier, Johann van Derwal and Robert Rosa surveyed individuals knowledgeable about space exploration.

With the assistance of Space Forum Administrator Dick DeLoach, the three sent 2,400 questionnaires via EasyPlex to space aficionados. Fifteen questions were asked, ranging from opinions on the necessity of space flight to the humanistic and economic benefits of exploration.

The project—called an Interdisciplinary Qualifying Project—is part of a required course for all WPI engineering and physical sciences students studying social sciences as a complement to their technical education. Students work in project offices in London and Washington, D.C.

This was the first time a WPI team has used computer communications to poll a large group of people. And CompuServe scored an "A," according to the students. Pothier says that being able to use EasyPlex saved them an enormous amount of time ("We didn't have to stuff and address envelopes and lick stamps") as well as money. In addition, they could pinpoint the audience they wanted to survey.

What did they determine about manned space exploration? "The rationale in the past has been nationalistic to promote America's preeminent position in space," says Pothier. "We discovered through our survey that this is no longer enough to justify manned space exploration beyond earth's orbit. For this to develop in the future, the rationale will have to be more humanistic. For instance, people believe it is worthwhile because of a desire to grow and avoid stagnation. Although the economic reasons must also be sound, humanistic reasons and other intangibles are as important."

—Cathryn Conroy

Kinsearch Reunites Adoptees, Parents

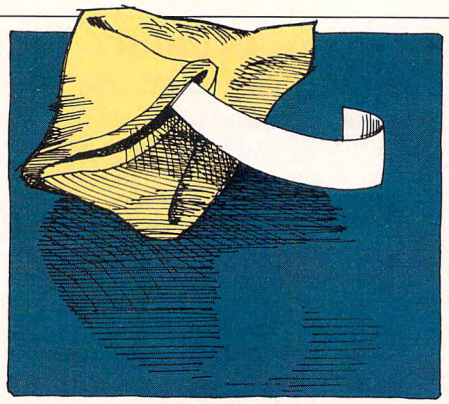
Inspiration struck Russell Saupe several years ago while watching a "Phil Donahue Show" episode about adoptees. He subsequently founded Kinsearch to reunite adoptees with their biological relatives. He uses CompuServe as a way to contact people he is searching for.

Kinsearch maintains a database of names and uses contacts on bulletin board systems and information services such as CompuServe to match adoptees with their blood relatives.

"We don't match any adoptee under age 18 without the full consent of the adoptive parent or guardian," says Saupe. "If a match occurs, both parties are contacted and given a second opportunity to decide if a reunion is desired." No names are released without the consent of both parties.

While Kinsearch does not charge a fee to find either adoptees or biological parents, there is a one-time $20 fee for processing registration forms and updating the computerized database.

If you would like to learn more about Kinsearch, Russell Saupe can be reached on CompuServe through the National Bulletin Board (GO BULLET). Information is also available in the Adoption Issues Data Library on the National Issues Forum (GO ISSUESFORUM).



Smart Cookies

Computers can do a lot of things, but they can't wash the dishes or cook dinner. Now a new software program—selling for only $6.95—can help with dessert.

"Cookies," a program for IBM PCs, "bakes" electronic fortune cookies. Every time you turn on your computer, a fortune appears on the screen.

"Cookies" also offers one-liners and helpful tips. Fortunes can be personalized to include the names of family and friends.

And when the batch gets stale—as all cookies will if they sit too long—you can throw them out and whip up your own fresh ones using any word processor or text editor.

For information, contact New Riders Publishing, P.O. Box 4846, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360; 818/991-5392.

Climatic Data Disks

The National Climatic Data Center is offering climatic data on disks for use on most personal computers. The Center is operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and is providing the data for a minimum $20 fee per dataset. Formats are available for most popular computers, except Apple and Commodore.

Some of the popular datasets available include historical heating and cooling degree day data; daily temperature, precipitation and degree day readings from the National Weather Service; and summaries of daily and monthly observer data. Special requests for customized data will be honored if the information has been compiled.

Additional information can be obtained by contacting NCDC at 704/259-0682. To reach a menu of online weather services, type GO WEATHER on CompuServe.

—James Moran

First and Last Words in Advertising

The Salinon Corp., a Dallas-based software firm, after analyzing more than 33,000 advertising slogans and expressions, came up with a list of words considered popular and effective—or overused and trite. (Take your pick.) The list includes "computer," "more," "do," "can," "business" and "make."

Some other interesting facts discovered by Salinon:

- "The" was used 6,070 times in corporate slogans.
- One of the least-used words in advertising slogans was "woman." It was used 39 times compared to 144 times for "man" and 56 times for "baby."
- There were 587 different expressions used in the slogans of high-tech firms with 1,121 unique words and 941 rare words.

The Salinon Corp. sells a variety of PC-based software tools that involve the creative use of words and phrases, including Headliner, a program that will create headlines, slogans and jingles.

For information, contact The Salinon Corp., 7430 Greenville Ave., Dallas, TX 75231; 214/692-9091.

—Cathryn Conroy

Someone to Watch over Me

The FBI may be reading your electronic mail if you regularly use bulletin board systems.

Glen Roberts, a publisher of books, magazines and newsletters oriented toward privacy and surveillance, says that the FBI has become involved with the casual monitoring of many BBS systems. Major information services such as CompuServe do not allow casual access to their systems. In a report published this year, Roberts states that the FBI is threatened by communications media.

"Unlike other communications media, information on a BBS does not get read by anyone before its instantaneous publication," Roberts says. "Therefore, the FBI has much less of a possibility of intimidating the owner of a BBS into not publishing certain information. The FBI also acts as if BBSes have a monopoly on the distribution of so-called 'illegal information.' [They] use this 'danger' for justification to monitor the activities on these systems. In reality, however, BBSes transfer much less 'illegal information' than the phone system."

Roberts believes that government agencies should not be snooping through electronic communications. He points out that where legitimate investigative information needs to be obtained, there are adequate legal means, primarily search warrants and federal or state laws, that can be used.

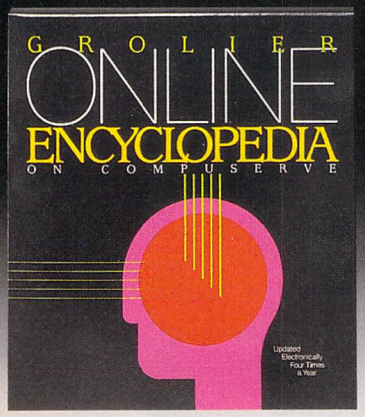
"BBSes bring the power of freedom of the press to the average citizen," Roberts says. "The only way to keep this power available to the average citizen is an aggressive stance against government meddling in them. The best way to do this is to do our best to make sure the government follows its own rules."

Information on Roberts' report may be obtained from the publisher at 313/747-7027.

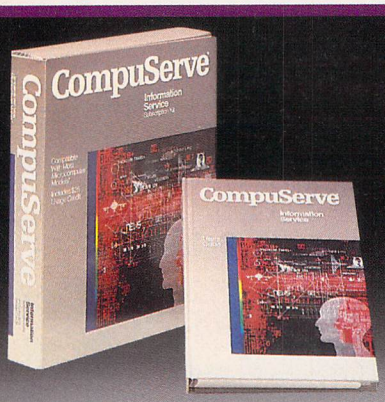
FINGER SHOPPING

CompuServe offers a variety of products that save you time and money during your online sessions. Other products bring online offerings to a much fuller life, and CompuServe fashions make attractive additions to any wardrobe. The spring Fingershopping sale is the place to find savings on numerous CompuServe products.

The spring Fingershopping sale runs from March 1, 1988 through April 30, 1988.



***Grolier Online Encyclopedia* Subscription Kit**
The *Grolier Academic American Online Encyclopedia* is ideal for students of all ages. The Grolier Subscription Kit features a one-year renewable subscription to the *Grolier Online Encyclopedia*, plus a membership to CompuServe, a $15 usage credit and complete Grolier and CompuServe users guides.
$49.95



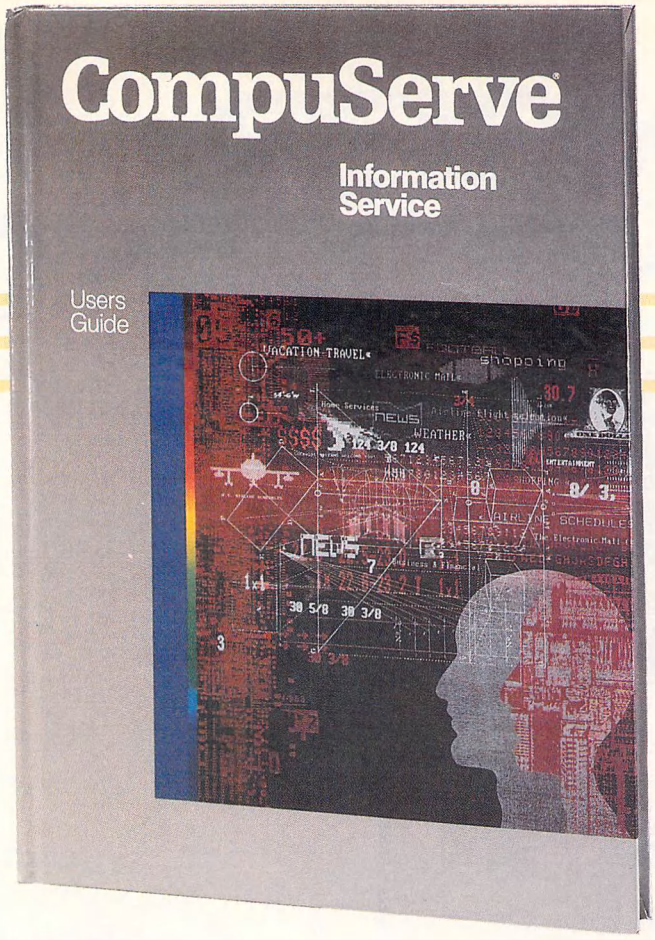
The CompuServe Information Service Subscription Kit
Why not have another User ID number and electronic mailbox for a traveling member of the family or firm? The CompuServe Information Service Subscription Kit includes a copy of the *CompuServe Users Guide*, a 24-page, full-color overview of the service offerings, more than a dozen Reference Cards, a Quick Reference Word index, a System Configuration Diagram, plus:

- a $25 introductory usage credit
- a User ID number and password
- a list of Information Service rates and local telephone access numbers
- a subscription to *Online Today* magazine

$39.95

New *CompuServe Almanac*
(Third Edition)
There are hundreds of offerings on the CompuServe Information Service you may have never visited. Use the *CompuServe Almanac* (Third Edition) to get acquainted with those unfamiliar areas without visiting them individually online. More than 300 pages are loaded with helpful features, presenting products in "workbook" style to help you research and recall key destinations. It's certain to pay for itself in connect time savings.

Reg. $12.95 **Save $5.00** **$7.95**



Back Issues of *Online Today* Magazine
Online Today magazine's back issues represent an archive of incisive articles tracking the evolution and impact of videotex and computer communication. Use a list of feature articles from back issues, provided online, to obtain volumes missing from your set, or to select issues of interest published before you became a subscriber.

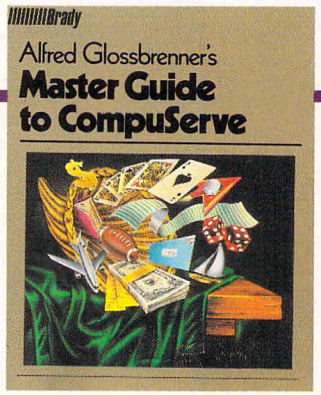
Reg. $2.50 **Save $1.00** **$1.50**

CompuServe Users Guide
This spiral-bound, hardcover, 200-page guide is highly recommended for subscribers who have come online through the CompuServe IntroPak program. It is the same guide that is included in the Information Service Subscription Kit. The guide covers:

- EasyPlex™ electronic mail
- the Executive News Service
- the National Bulletin Board
- Citizen's Band Simulator
- Forum message boards
- data libraries and conferencing
- information transfers to and from your computer
- travel services
- financial services
- electronic shopping
- interactive games and more

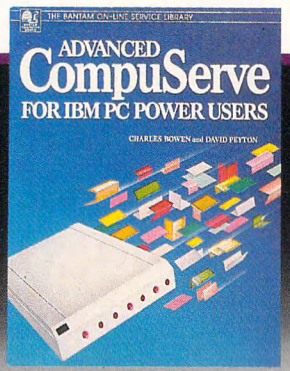
A System Configuration Diagram, an alphabetized Quick Reference Word index and more than a dozen Reference Cards come with the *Information Service Users Guide* for further assistance.

Reg. $14.95 **Save $4.00** **$10.95**



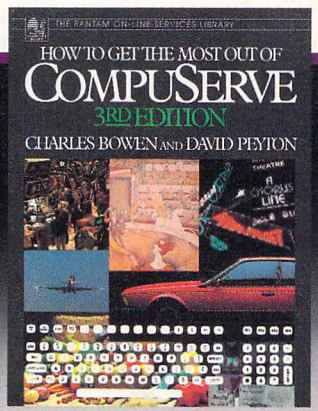
Master Guide to CompuServe
by Alfred Glossbrenner
From the author of several online computing books comes the *Master Guide to CompuServe*, written for novice and advanced CompuServe users alike. According to the author, it not only explains how to use the service, but gives you all the necessary tools to keep up with the constant expansion of CompuServe Information Service offerings. It's an invaluable resource for CompuServe users of all levels.

Reg. $19.95 **Save $3.00** **$16.95**



Advanced CompuServe for IBM Power Users by Charles Bowen and David Peyton
A must for any IBM power user's library. This book is written for the accomplished CompuServe user with an IBM PC or compatible. It addresses some of the finer points of CompuServe such as uploading and downloading non-commercial software to and from IBM-related Forums, archived and data library files, communications programs and several other advanced topics.

Reg. $19.95 **Save $3.00** **$16.95**



How To Get the Most Out Of CompuServe (Third Edition)
by Charles Bowen and David Peyton
Earlier editions of this Bantam book earned acclaim from accomplished CompuServe users, novices and even non-subscribers for the step-by-step discussion of CompuServe's leading products. Included in the book is a $6 usage credit!

Reg. $19.95 **Save $3.00** **$16.95**

CompuServe
VIDTEX™
Enhanced Terminal Communications Software
Compatible with the Apple II family
Compatible with the Commodore 64
Compatible with the Atari 800 Series (64K)

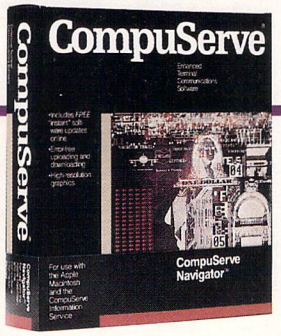
VIDTEX Terminal Communications Software

No one links you to CompuServe like CompuServe. Whether you have an Apple®, Atari® or Commodore®, you'll get the best link-up with genuine CompuServe communications software. (Complete information about VIDTEX compatibility requirements is available online: GO VIDTEX) Only CompuServe gives you such a complete communications software package that includes:

- "instant" FREE software updates online
- error-free uploading and downloading on CompuServe
- low- and medium-resolution graphics
- automatic log-on and menu navigation files
- programmable function keys
- capture buffer
- adjustable communication settings
- cursor positioning
- support of Hayes-compatible modems

VIDTEX works with the Atari 800, 800 XL, 600 XL with 64K, 1200 XL, 65 XE, 130 XE, the Apple II Family, Commodore 64, TRS-80 Model III and Color Computer.

$39.95


CompuServe
Enhanced Terminal Communications Software
CompuServe Navigator™
For use with the Apple Macintosh and the CompuServe Information Service

CompuServe Navigator Communications Software

CompuServe Navigator communications software for the Macintosh lets you automate online access to the CompuServe Information Service. Specify your online destinations and tasks and Navigator does the rest. It works more efficiently, thus conserving online time. Navigator includes all of the following and more:

- latest version of CompuServe's B protocol; 30% faster than industry standard XMODEM
- support of GIF graphics
- CompuServe Customer Service support
- offline composition capabilities

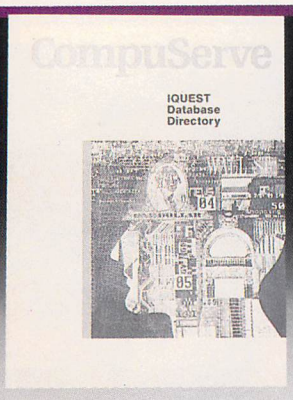
$59.95

Professional Connection 3

This powerful, all new software package for the IBM PC, XT, AT and most compatibles has all the features of VIDTEX plus more. PC3 illustrates colorful financial charts, pictures and weather maps with CompuServe's new GIF protocol, NAPLPS and RLE graphics. It also dials the phone, completes your connection and takes you where you want to go online—with just a few simple keystrokes. PC3 includes all of the following and more:

- latest version of CompuServe's B protocol for even faster downloads
- 110-9600 baud support
- remote job script command language
- terminal settings directory
- custom menus
- menu or command driven options

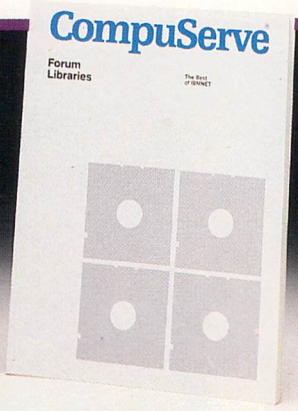
$49.95



IQuest Database Directory

Use IQuest more efficiently and effectively with its own guide published by CompuServe. It provides a description of each database and is broken down by subject for easy reference. Anyone who uses IQuest will find this a valuable tool to speed research and conserve online connect time.

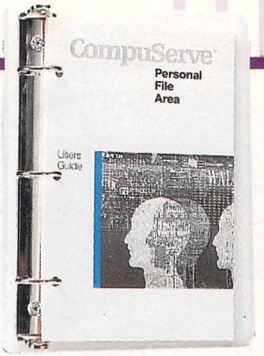
$3.95



The Best of IBMNET

This Forrum software guide presents indexed descriptions of top offerings from IBMNET, already in its second edition. It catalogs hundreds of powerful utility programs and standalone applications available for public access on CompuServe. It pays for itself in connect time savings. Available while supplies last.

Reg. $9.95 **Save $1.45** **$8.50**

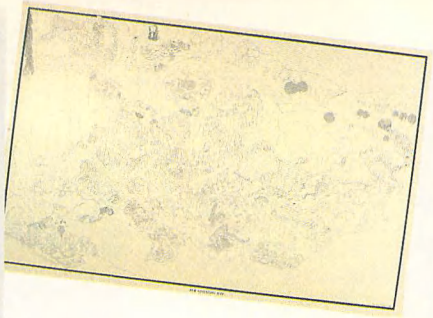


Personal File Area Guide

All subscribers receive 128K of storage in a personal file area. EasyPlex messages, Executive News Service clippings, files, "form" letters and more can be stored for 30 days without charge. File management programs, text editors, disk storage techniques, EasyPlex shortcuts and more are explained in this guide. Just what you need to use your storage area to its utmost potential. Includes: ICS, Terminal Parameter and EDIT Reference Cards. (Binder not included)

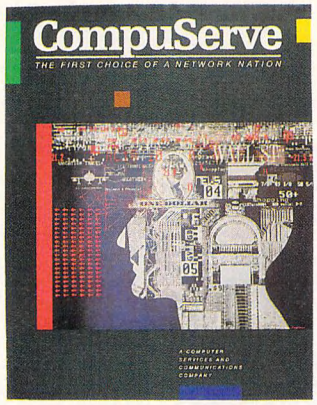
Reg. $10.95 **Save $3.45** **$7.50**

New Adventure (751 Point Game)
Reg. $4.95 Save $3.00 **$1.95**

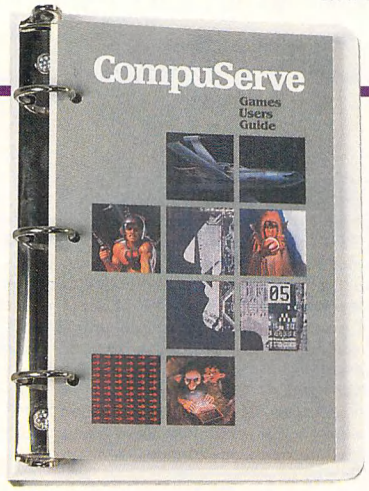


Original Adventure (350 Point Game)
Reg. $3.95 **Save $2.45** **$1.50**

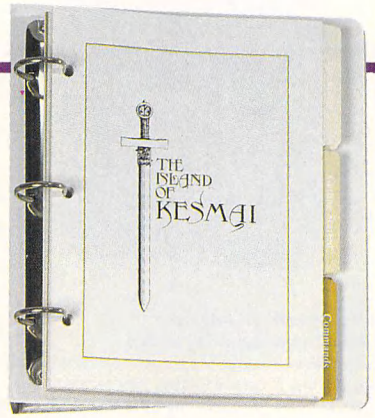
***Adventure Game* Maps**
These exciting adventure maps are drawn in outline so participants can color their maps to match their imaginations. Both illustrate pathways and pitfalls one encounters in the *Original Adventure* and *New Adventure* Games on CompuServe.



***CompuServe: First Choice of a Network Nation* Poster**
World-renowned illustrator, Fred Otnes, produced the commissioned illustration that is the focal point for this full color, 23" x 30" poster. A perfect addition to a home computer alcove, den or office wall.
Reg. $4.95
Save $2.00 **$2.95**

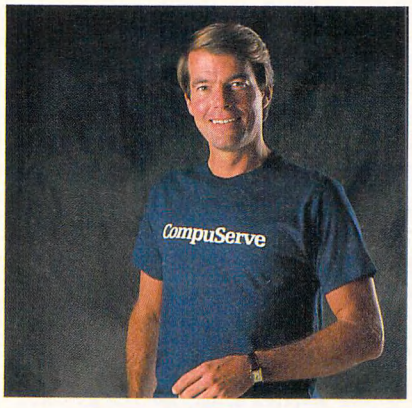


CompuServe Games Guide
(Second Edition)
This manual of the CompuServe game universe offers descriptions of all game offerings, rules, playing suggestions and a section on getting the most out of the Gamers' Forum. Recently updated. Guide comes in a sturdy vinyl binder.
Reg. $17.45 **Save $2.50** **$14.95**



Island of Kesmai Guide
One of CompuServe's leading adventure games, *Island of Kesmai* is like no other online island you've ever visited. Prepare yourself with this comprehensive island atlas. Meet the inhabitants, learn their customs and social mores. You won't just bring the game's interactive features to greater light, you'll lead a longer life in your island role. Guide comes in a sturdy vinyl binder.
Reg. $19.00 **Save $2.50** **$16.50**

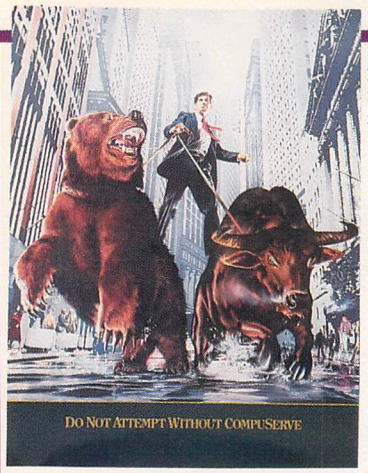
***MegaWars I* Package**
Real-life accessories for the fantasy gamer. This package includes a *MegaWars Briefing Guide* in a three-ring binder, along with a series of five *MegaWars* spacecraft blueprints and a galaxy map to enhance your *MegaWars I* play.
Reg. $16.95 **Save $2.00** **$14.95**



CompuServe Logo T-shirt
Announce your role as one of the leaders. Display your online allegiance to the nation's leading information service with this cotton/poly T-shirt silk-screened with the CompuServe logo. Available in light blue, navy blue and red.
$7.95

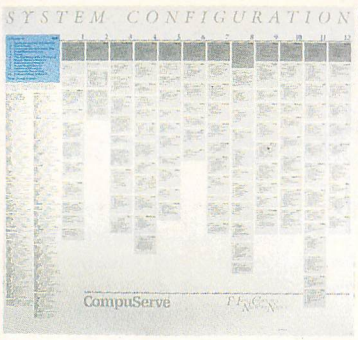
***Island of Kesmai* T-Shirt**
Make sure you look your best for your next visit to the island. An *Island of Kesmai* T-shirt is the ideal attire for encounters with island inhabitants of all sorts.
$7.95

***BlackDragon* T-Shirt**
Announce your gaming success by sporting this black T-shirt with white *BlackDragon* illustration. A must for any true dragonslayer.
$7.95



Bull and Bear Poster
Show your support for the financial products that supported you during the market crash of 1987 with a CompuServe Financial Products poster. Original bull and bear art, as seen in CompuServe financial ads. A welcome addition to any investor's office or den.

$3.50

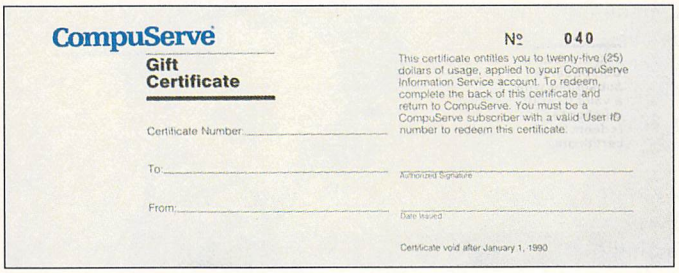


CompuServe Information Service System Configuration Wall Chart
This 35" x 33" poster (7/87 version) depicts all screens appearing on the Top Menu and all screens accessible from those initial choices. Extremely helpful for navigating around the service.

$3.95

CompuServe Digital Desk Clock
Mounted within a clear lucite desk stand for high visibility, this contemporary timepiece is an attractive and useful addition to any computer workstation—home or office. It prominently displays the CompuServe logo and comes with a perpetual calendar in an adjacent window.

Reg. $10.95 **Save $4.45** **$6.50**


CompuServe
Gift Certificate

№ 040

This certificate entitles you to twenty-five (25) dollars of usage, applied to your CompuServe Information Service account. To redeem, complete the back of this certificate and return to CompuServe. You must be a CompuServe subscriber with a valid User ID number to redeem this certificate.

Certificate Number:

To:

Authorized Signature

From:

Date Issued

Certificate void after January 1, 1990

CompuServe Gift Certificates
Give the gift of CompuServe. Gift Certificates are available in the amount of $25 and can be applied to future online usage charges. A CompuServe Gift Certificate is a useful and unique gift for any online enthusiast.

$25.00 each

Non-subscribers may order by calling 800/848-8199. In Ohio or Canada call 614/457-0802.

Based on the total price of your merchandise, postage and handling is automatically calculated according to the following scale and added to your total.

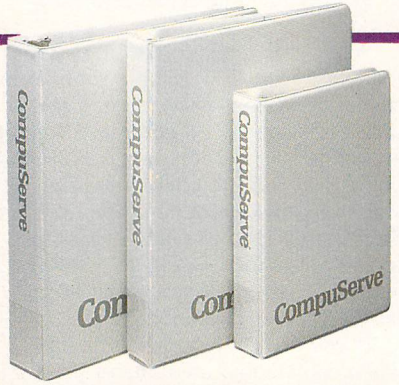
Amount	Postage/handling
$0 - $.99	$.50
$1.00 - $7.49	$1.50
$7.50 - $14.99	$2.00
$15.00 - $39.99	$2.50
$40.00 - $69.99	$3.00
$70 and up	$3.50

FREE!
With qualifying purchase of $25

CompuServe Information Service System Configuration Wall Chart
As a special incentive to place an online order during the Fingershopping Sale, any order over $25 placed between March 1 and April 30, 1988 will receive a (7/87 version) CompuServe Information Service System Configuration Wall Chart FREE. The chart will be included automatically in qualifying orders; there is no need to enter an order for your bonus item. Detailed descriptions and prices for all products available for Fingershopping can be found online. Enter GO ORDER at any Information Service prompt.

***British Legends* T-Shirt**
As you traverse the unfamiliar lands of *British Legends,* clad yourself in this attractive *British Legends* T-shirt. It's a great way to outwardly display your enthusiasm for this exciting role-playing game. Only available in red.

$7.95



CompuServe Three-ring Binders with Logo

1-1/2" spine, for 8-1/2" x 11" pages (white with grey print; vinyl) **$2.95**

2" spine, for 8-1/2" x 11" pages (white with grey print; vinyl) **$3.50**

1" spine for 5-1/2" x 8-1/2" pages (white with grey print; vinyl) **$2.50**

1-1/2" hardboard binder and slipcase with attractive rainbow design for 5-1/2" x 8-1/2" pages (not shown; while supplies last)

Reg. $3.95 **Save $1.45** **$2.50**

CompuServe®

CompuServe Corporate Headquarters
5000 Arlington Centre Blvd.
Columbus, Ohio 43220

Get More Out of Online Time

It doesn't take long for a discerning subscriber to discover that the best way to use CompuServe is to develop good habits and a plan for being efficient online.

The "helter-skelter" method of accessing CompuServe is not the preferred procedure. And since time is money on CompuServe, new users who disregard good online habits often feel frustrated when the first bill arrives and it seems as if little has been done for the amount of money invested. Some subscribers have told me they became so frustrated as new CompuServe users that they nearly gave up trying to use the service within a few weeks.

You can avoid this pitfall by following a few simple rules as you devise a plan of action for spending your online time wisely.

First and foremost, learn as much about the system offline as you can. An investment of a few dollars in printed material can bring about savings in the long run. You'll find a large selection of printed information about CompuServe by typing GO ORDER at any prompt. Review the descriptions of these volumes, including the CompuServe Users Guide, the CompuServe Almanac and others, at your leisure since the time you spend in the Online Ordering area is free.

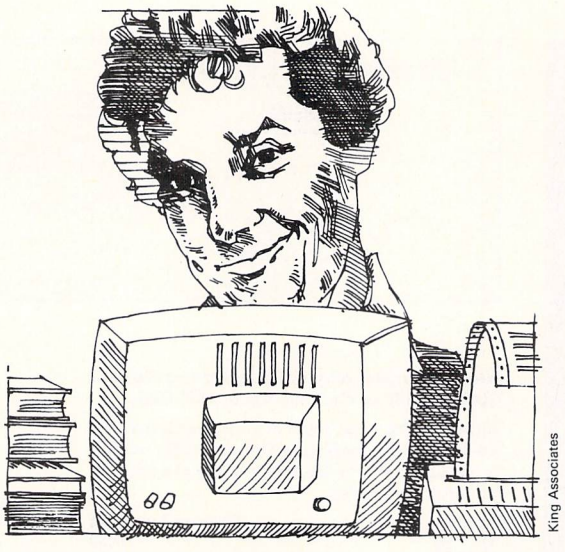
If you are a new user, it's probably best that you use 300 baud while learning the system so you can pay close attention to the information scrolling across your screen as you move from one part of the system to another.

Better yet, save to disk or print everything you do and see in your early trips. Once you're offline, review these early forays to see exactly what you did (both right and wrong) and how you might be able to do it better the next time you log on.

CompuServe's menu structure is reassuring. It lets you know exactly where you are in the system and gives you a sort of "security blanket" while you're exploring and blazing new trails.

Use the menus to get a feel for the system, but discard them as quickly as you can and use the GO commands to get from one part of the system to another. For example to get from the top menu to a specific forum via menus could require calling several levels of menus to the screen, one at a time. The command GO followed by the page identifier of the forum can take you directly to that service, no matter where it is located on the menu structure.

You can find the page identifiers to use with the GO commands by using the FIND command to connect you with the index of services. Use keywords describing the service for your search. Get to know how to use the FIND command early since it's a key to quickly locating services on the system.



King Associates

After you've explored the system, you may want to develop a routine for accessing various services in a single online session. It's a good idea to plot an online "script" on paper. For example, if you want to check the price of a stock in Quick Quote and then move to the weather area to read your local forecast, list the commands you'll be using on a sheet of paper and keep it beside you for reference.

If you are going to access areas where substantial amounts of material will be read, don't try to read it online, especially if you use 1200 baud or 2400 baud. Send the text material to a file on your computer disk and read it offline.

For composing forum messages or EasyPlex mail, learn how to use your word processor to compose the messages offline and "upload" them to the system once you are online. Your word processor must be able to create files in ASCII, free of special formatting code or characters peculiar to your word processor. In addition, each terminal program is different when it comes to transmitting ASCII files to a host system such as CompuServe. Learn the commands for doing that with your own terminal program. If you want help, contact the administrator in the forum dedicated to your kind of computer.

Remember, help is usually no more than a few keystrokes away. At nearly any system prompt, you can type a question mark or the word HELP and press the Return key and the system will respond with immediate online help. Remember also that no matter where you are in the system, typing a T for TOP will usually take you back to the top or main menu on the CompuServe system, familiar ground to nearly all of us.

Moving toward a routine as quickly as possible while learning as much as you can about the system will take you a long way toward making your online time profitable so that you'll return again and again to a valuable resource.

David Peyton co-authored How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe *and* Advanced CompuServe for IBM PC Power Users. *His CompuServe User ID number is 76703,244.*

Read Online Columns

When you want to read opinions behind the latest computer and information industry news, turn to *Online Today Daily Edition's* Columns. You'll find insights, witticisms, user tips and more by leading computer journalists. To read any of the columns, type GO OLT-110 at any CompuServe Information Service prompt.

COLUMNS	OLT-110
Ask Dr. John	OLT-3200
Beginner's Corner	OLT-140
Behind the Screens	OLT-130
Calendar of Events	OLT-1000
Columns by Gutman	OLT-175
Online with Bowen	OLT-3500
Uploads Updates	OLT-3700

Breaking Programmer's Block

For the past few months, we've looked at various facets of forum data libraries, covering the technical points —the *how* of using them—but not the more subjective question: *why* use them?

For dedicated forum members, the answer is obvious. The data libraries of CompuServe's more than 100 forums are treasure troves of thousands of useful programs and articles, from nationally acclaimed public-domain and user-supported software to "local" creations important to a small but ardent band of followers. For many—myself included—these applications and utilities form the core of our computer systems, making use of the data libraries fundamental.

Lately I've become aware of another group of computerists who use data libraries in a different way: working programmers and serious computer hobbyists.

I'm certainly not a programmer, but I'm intrigued by how a programmer's approach to a big project is similar to a writer's. Midway into the endeavor, both become immersed in the work, ideas nurturing themselves, spawning new ideas, a chain-reaction roaring toward conclusion. When the process works, it is magic—a *personal* experience resulting in something of general interest or usefulness. When it doesn't work, it's writer's block—ideas get tangled up and go stale.

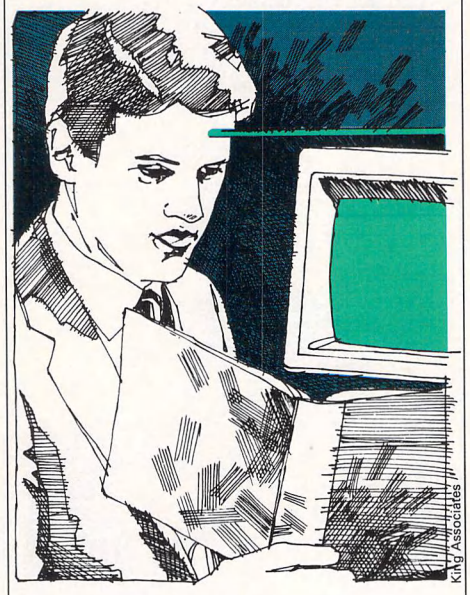
Many writers deal with their periods of creative stagnation by forcing themselves out of their garrets and back into society. Talk to people. *Do lunch.* Read somebody *else's* book. Breaking the block means opening up to different perspectives and insights and generally freshening up for when the process begins again. Some programmers use files in the data libraries to do the same thing.

My friend Stewart Schneider, a lawyer by trade, is a programmer in his heart and soul. When he recently accepted a new law-related assignment, his first instinct was to compose the software tools he needed for the job.

When his creative block developed, it was familiar to me. A programmer's block, like a writer's, often comes not when the challenge is new and different, but when it is old, familiar territory. For Stew, while the machine he was writing for and the language he was writing in were new, the objective itself was not. He'd written essentially the same applications software for different systems two years earlier. As a result, there weren't enough new vistas to keep the creative juices flowing.

To break the block, he turned to the online data libraries. It was then I saw that programmers are like writers in other ways, too.

For instance, no writer relishes the thought that someone else might already have tackled a subject from the same approach he or she contemplates. In other words, while a non-programmer might scout the data libraries for complete do-everything applications software, Stew looked for bits and pieces. Algorithms. Subroutines. In short, *ideas*.



I watched as he searched pertinent data libraries. "A new B-tree sort. Awright! ... Hmmmm, a word-cleaning routine for Windows. I wonder ... *I* can do that ..." Honestly, I usually don't understand him when he talks like that, but I recognized the transformation that was taking place.

I remember a writer who, when stumped, sits and quietly thumbs his *Roget's Thesaurus*. He's not expecting the book to give him the right word, but to put him in the mood, to urge him on in his search.

For Stew, the process broke the mental roadblocks. He says that 90 percent of the finished program came from routines he had downloaded from CompuServe. Sure, the routines may have started out on CompuServe. However, once he began incorporating the ideas into his project, The Programmer was back on duty—refining, enhancing, polishing, reworking—and by the end, it was truly *his* work.

The forum data libraries aren't just for us "end users." On the contrary, a vital aspect of them is the care and feeding of those who compose the digital arts.

Throughout the system are forums devoted to specific computers and software. Most computers have at least one forum supporting them. Similarly, most of the major software publishers —Microsoft, Ashton-Tate, Borland International, Lotus Development, Software Publishing and others—have one or more forums online. You can use the FIND command to locate them. For example, typing FIND APPLE or FIND IBM at any prompt will display a menu of relevant services.

Once inside a forum, you may find that an entire subtopic of the message board and data libraries is devoted to programming questions and answers. Type SN at a forum's main prompt to see the list of message board subtopic names. The LN command will provide a list of the library subtopic names.

In addition, some forums on CompuServe are devoted exclusively to programming. A tip: If the words "software" or "programmer" do not appear in the name, look for "developers"—these days, many of the programming forums have the word "developers" or "development" in their names.

And if you can't locate a forum serving your needs, drop by the *Online Today* Readers' Forum (GO OLTFORUM) and leave us a message. Maybe we can help you find one.

Charles Bowen is a contributing editor of Online Today. *His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,411.*

What's Going On?

If you want to know what's going on around CompuServe, check into *Online Today Daily Edition*. Here you'll find constantly revised news for and about the CompuServe community. GO OLT-50 from any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service.

ONLINE TODAY

Software Solutions

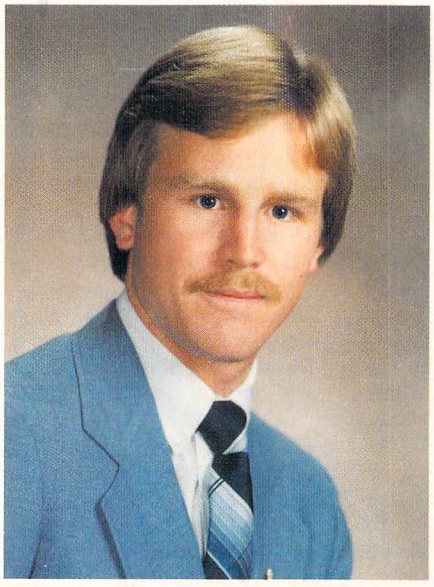
Investors Combine Financial Packages with Online Services

by Robert Cullen

Shortly after becoming a CompuServe subscriber, Larry Austin, a computer programmer from Malibu, Calif., went looking for online investment information.

"I wanted to satisfy my curiosity about what was available," he explains. His search led him to the Commodities databases (GO COMMODITIES).

Although Austin was not an experienced commodities investor, he was impressed by CompuServe's extensive reports on currencies, grains, oils, metals and stock indexes, to name a few. But he could not readily see how he could create personal wealth from this sea of online investment information.



Analyzing data offline: *Austin*

Austin then found an offline solution for his online problem. He purchased two programs that enable him to perform offline analysis of CompuServe financial data.

His primary program is Compu-Trac, ($1,900, plus $300 annual maintenance fee; Telerate Systems Inc., 1017 Pleasant St., New Orleans, LA 70115; 800/535-7990) a sophisticated investment analysis program that provides more than 40 sophisticated routines and studies to analyze securities trading patterns.

Compu-Trac pulls this data from CompuServe with the aid of The Data Connection ($99.95; Quantitative Financial Services, P.O. Box 565, Ardsley, NY 10502; 914/591-6990), a specialized data retrieval program. "The Data Connection makes a list of all contracts in my portfolio, then logs onto CompuServe and dives after the data. It then loads the data directly onto files in my computer," explains Austin. Austin uses an auto-run feature in The Data Connection to gather data from CompuServe during offpeak hours, when access charges are lower.

Investors who find the cost of Compu-Trac a bit steep for their budgets can analyze trading patterns with MetaStock ($195; Computer Asset Management, P.O. Box 26743, Salt Lake City, UT 84126; 801/974-5115). MetaStock also interfaces with The Data Connection to retrieve CompuServe data for offline analysis.

Garry Burdick

Comparing performance: *Rutherford*

Ron Rutherford in New York City uses The Data Connection and MetaStock to obtain from CompuServe performance data on 800-plus mutual funds. Performance results of these funds are listed in The Asset Allocator, a monthly newsletter Rutherford publishes for mutual fund investors. "The Data Connection looks for mutual fund distributions and adjusts historical data to calculate total return for each fund. MetaStock displays these returns on graphs, which allows me to see quickly how each fund is performing," says Rutherford. Rutherford also uses the two programs to retrieve CompuServe data on individual stocks, bonds, currencies and market indexes.

CompuServe data serves as the fuel for other investment analysis software. The Mutual Fund Investor ($195; American River Software, 1523 Kingsford Drive, Carmichael, CA 95608; 916/483-1600) retrieves mutual fund data from CompuServe to construct performance analysis graphs. Like The Data Connection, The Mutual Fund Investor also adjusts fund performance data to reflect dividend and capital gains distributions.

Jim Donald, an executive with The Scott Key Companies in Seattle, Wash., uses The Mutual Fund Investor to analyze performance of 200-plus mutual funds. "The Mutual Fund Investor is a powerful analytical tool that allows me to do what-if analysis of various moving averages," says Donald.

Programs that attempt to predict future changes in securities prices by analyzing historical price action are generally called technical analysis software. Compu-Trac, MetaStock and The Mutual Fund Investor are examples of technical analysis software.

By contrast, programs that study company financial data to predict future securities prices are called fundamental analysis software. CompuServe supplies fundamental company data that can be analyzed online (GO ANALYSIS) or offline using standalone fundamental analysis software.

Quant IX ($69; Quant IX Software, 5900 N. Port Washington Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53217; 414/961-1991) is a standalone fundamental analysis program that follows tenets of Modern Portfolio Theory to analyze individual company data and develop price projections. Modern Portfolio Theory is an esoteric investment approach pioneered by university scholars and used widely by professional money managers. Also known as quantitative analysis, this system assigns a theoretical investment value to a stock based on complex study of historical, current and projected data. Quant IX obtains data for its analytical routines through connection to CompuServe.

While the calculations it performs are complex, use of Quant IX to analyze stocks is easy, according to Peter Cammarata, a biochemist in Skokie, Ill. "You put in your data in and the pro-

gram does all the work," says Cammarata. Familiar with computers through his biochemistry work, Cammarata wanted software that would give him a structured approach to investing. "I decided the seat-of-the-pants investing I used to do was old-fashioned. This program helps make my investing more objective," says Cammarata.

CompuServe subscribers do not have to go offline to find investment analysis software. Investment work-

Kathleen Reeves

Calculating quickly: *Cammarata*

sheets designed for use with spreadsheets, notably 1-2-3 published by Lotus Development Corp., can be downloaded into personal computers from the Investors' Forum (GO INVFORUM). More than 20 separate files containing numerous financial analysis spreadsheets are available. Worksheets for managing a portfolio, writing options, calculating loan amortization tables and predicting the likelihood of a firm going bankrupt are a few examples of the worksheets available. Subscribers must already own or purchase the underlying spreadsheet program required to run these worksheets.

Downloading information to spreadsheets has long been popular, but CompuServe financial data can be downloaded and formatted for use with database software as well. A good example of this is through the use of Apollo Stock Market Utilities ($149; Schmidt Enterprises, 7448 Newcastle Ave., Reseda, CA 91335; 818/342-5930). Data retrieved by these utilities is formatted into a delimited textfile, the standard format used by database programs.

Robert Cullen is a financial and computer journalist who writes extensively about investment software and services.

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Through NewsGrid, a service that compiles dispatches from some of the world's largest wire services, you can select the "Market Update" option for specific information on the financial markets and the economy. The New York Stock Exchange, American Stock Exchange, over-the-counter stocks, bonds, currencies, commodities and the condition of the economy all have separate menus within "Market Update."

Each Market Update story appears on a regular basis. Some are updated every half-hour while others are updated daily, weekly, monthly or quarterly as appropriate.

For example, if you were seeking stock information on a Friday and selected the NYSE option under Market Update, you'd see a list of stories, including the Dow Jones averages (updated every half-hour), that day's NYSE composite prices, NYSE indexes (updated every hour), Friday's market index comparisons (NYSE, AMEX, DJ), Friday's 15 most active stocks, Friday's largest NYSE net changes and more. On Jan. 29, for instance, Tenneco and Public Service New Mexico led the list of 15 most active NYSE Stocks. Teledyne, with a net gain of 7½ points, led the list of that day's largest NYSE net changes.

Under the AMEX menu in Market Update, you'd see such things as Friday's AMEX indexes, AMEX sales, AMEX market value index, AMEX advances and declines, and AMEX 10 most active stocks. The OTC menu option contains comparable reports, such as Friday's OTC market trends, closing indexes, 10 most active stocks and NASDAQ-100 index. The Bonds Market Update menu carries reports such as bond sales and closing bond averages.

US credit market yield, foreign exchange rate and US dollar report are available through Market Update's Currency menu. Other reports include gold and silver coin prices, and US credit market yields. For example, on Friday, Jan. 29, the gold and silver coin prices report showed that the US Eagle 1 troy ounce coin was down to $474.50 from Thursday's price of $485.50.

Through the Commodities menu, you can select the Chicago Board of Trade Grain Market Report, the New York Cotton Exchange Closing Prices, Commodity Futures at a Glance, Moody's Commodity Index and Gold Futures.

NewsGrid's Economy Market Update menu includes reports of events affecting the nation's economy. For example, a report on US durable goods (Jan. 26, 1988) indicated that new orders for manufactured durable goods jumped 6.7 percent from November to December, largely due to aircraft orders. The December increase represented $7.4 billion, bringing orders for that month to a seasonally adjusted $118.7 billion. It was the fourth consecutive monthly gain in orders for big-ticket factory goods—everything from toasters to jetliners, according to the report.

To get the latest stock and economic information before making investment decisions, access NewsGrid (available at basic connect rates) by typing GO NEWSGRID and select Option 4, Market Update.

Could *Your* Business be Affected by Happenings in the Computer World Today?

Find out in *Online Today Daily Edition*. GO OLT-90 from any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service to get daily-updated computer news.

ONLINE TODAY

Take a Snapshot of Market Activity

by Mike Pietruk

Is the S&P 500 Index up or down today? Did gold close higher or lower in London? And did the American dollar suffer yet another decline against the Japanese yen and the British pound?

In today's volatile markets, investors and traders are discovering that they need a quick, current picture of what is happening in the stock market and other financial markets. Trade and investment decisions can no longer be based solely on the price movements of a particular stock. Instead, the whole market environment must be kept in mind.

Hourly radio network newscasts give only the rudimentary market data, usually limited to an old Dow Jones Industrials quote. CompuServe subscribers can check the hourly Associated Press Updates or read the reports from McGraw-Hill or Reuters in the Executive News Service. Cable television subscribers can watch the Financial News Network for updates. And, of course, you can call your stockbroker.

But none of these methods provides immediate access to the most current information. For this reason, CompuServe has introduced a product called Market Snapshot. "Snapshot will result in a one-page report showing statistically how the market is doing at any given moment," says Scott Clyde, CompuServe financial products manager. "It's fed by our recently expanded and improved Current Quotes system, so it uses 20-minute delayed data. It should be great for quote watchers, who might want to set it up as their first page by using PROFILE."

The report is divided into three parts. The top section gives you the CompuServe ticker symbol, daily high, low, last price and time of last update for the Dow Jones 30 Industrials, the Standard and Poor's 500 Index, and the NASDAQ composite as well as the PM London gold fix. The middle section contains foreign currency data on the Japanese yen, German deutsche mark, and the British pound vs. the US dollar. The report concludes with some general market statistics, such as total volume on the New York stock exchange, up and down volume, and the number of advancing and declining issues.

With these last four figures, you can easily compute the market's "trin" (trading index), one of the more important indicators used by short-term traders.

The Snapshot report is available to Executive Option subscribers and carries a 10-cent surcharge. To access it, type GO SNAPSHOT from most CompuServe Information Service prompts. To learn more about the Executive Option, type GO EXECUTIVE.

Several enhancements have recently been made to CompuServe's other online financial products. One of these is in the PRICE historical quotes database (GO PRICES). The new version contains revised issue and date prompts, which should make the wording more intuitive.

"Enhancements include entry of several tickers at a time," says Clyde. "It also remembers the date range from one issue to the next and is much friendlier in dealing with issues not trading across the entire date range."

The command GO PRICES will soon support "*name lookup" as now is the case with the Current Quotes Service (GO QQUOTES). "*Name lookup" permits the user to enter a company's name at the Issues prompt when the ticker symbol is unknown. This can save the time it would take to consult the Ticker or Cusip lookup programs (GO TICKER or GO CUSIP).

Most of these improvements are a direct result of subscriber requests via messages, Feedback and calls to Customer Service. Work has been done to PRICES, DISCLOSURE, TICKER and QQUOTE to make these products react in a more standardized, friendly fashion with the user—especially the inexperienced user.

To find out more about services for investors, access the main financial menu by typing GO MMM-1.

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Use Indicators to Better Understand Marketplace Activity

by J. David Edwards

Market indicators are technical measurements that investors and securities market analysts use to monitor and forecast the market's direction. Compiled by summarizing and massaging bits and pieces of information gathered from activity in the financial markets, they add meaning to what might otherwise be an overwhelming quantity of trading statistics.

Many investors consider rising or falling prices in popular market indexes such as the Dow Jones 30 Industrials, Standard & Poor's 500 or New York Stock Exchange Composite as indicators of the current market's trend.

The breadth of this trend (the degree to which all stocks appear to be flying together) is thought by many to be indicated by the ratio of stocks increasing in price as compared to those that are decreasing. This "advance/decline" ratio is also looked upon as an indicator of whether the market is currently overbought or oversold.

The momentum behind the trend is often equally important. Rising prices in a quiet market are not as significant as rising prices in an active one. Thus, investors in need of an indicator for market activity often use the volume of shares traded as their guide.

Even more significant to many investors are the risks associated with a given market. For example, volatility in a financial market (significant price swings occurring over short periods of time) presents a risk to investors that narrowly traded ones don't. Looking at the spread between high and low prices can be a good indicator of volatility—and a strong gauge for risk.

Of course, indicators exist for almost any type of investment, industry or market signal you wish to follow. Signs of speculation, seasonal tendencies, professional or public buying activity and more can be weaned from a myriad of available indicators.

An excellent way to find ticker symbols for a full complement of market indicators is to type an * followed by a carriage return at the Quick Quote (GO QQUOTE) prompt. From there a list of available indicators and their unique identifiers can be produced.

In addition, by typing GO INDICATORS from any CompuServe Information Service prompt, users can view a menu listing various indexes.

Once you have found the market indicators (and ticker symbols) that interest you, examining them can be a snap, literally. For example, look for the current trend described above in CompuServe's Current Market Snapshot (GO SNAPSHOT).

Up-to-the-minute comparisons of additional indicators can be displayed in Quick Quote (GO QQUOTE), CompuServe's current market quotations service. The current movement in the Dow Jones Industrial Average is displayed free of charge every time you enter Quick Quote. MicroQuote II, CompuServe's historical quotes service, includes daily histories for hundreds of indicators. The direction of the trend over time can be graphically presented in the Price/Volume Graph program (GO TREND).

A bull and bear market analysis can be done by running historical "what if" scenarios in Return Analysis (GO RETURN). And summary statistics for analysis can be provided in Pricing Statistics (GO PRISTATS). Other MicroQuote II services can be used to display historical pricing details and to help you download data to your microcomputer for further analysis.

Not surprisingly, finding one specific indicator for the market isn't easy, since the stock market itself is a leading indicator of the future of business. But an understanding of what market indicators can tell you, how they can be found, and where they can be used should help to provide a sounder understanding of today's complex financial marketplace.

Business Briefs

MMS Adds Daily Market Reports

MMS International, the world's largest online market analysis firm, has reorganized its menu to include Debt, Currency and Equity Market Reports.

These reports provide daily economical and technical analysis of the previous day's trading and an outlook for the next day's session at $5 per report.

The Debt Market Report focuses on the government securities market, and the Currency Market Report features international exchange rates. The Equity Market Report contains technical analysis of the stock index futures and options markets, and economic analysis of the overall equity markets.

MMS also offers a new Economic Briefing that combines two previous MMS Market Briefings. This report provides detailed analysis of monthly and quarterly economic data including MMS forecasts and a schedule of releases. GO MMS

Ashton-Tate Expands Support

The Ashton-Tate Forum has added support for the new RapidFile database product, the Master Graphics series and MultiMate Advantage II.

More sample files and articles will be available in the forum's data libraries as these products become more popular. Technical specialists are always available via the forum's message board to answer questions about any Ashton-Tate product. GO ASHFORUM

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Amazing Answers

Online Reference Databases Revolutionize Research

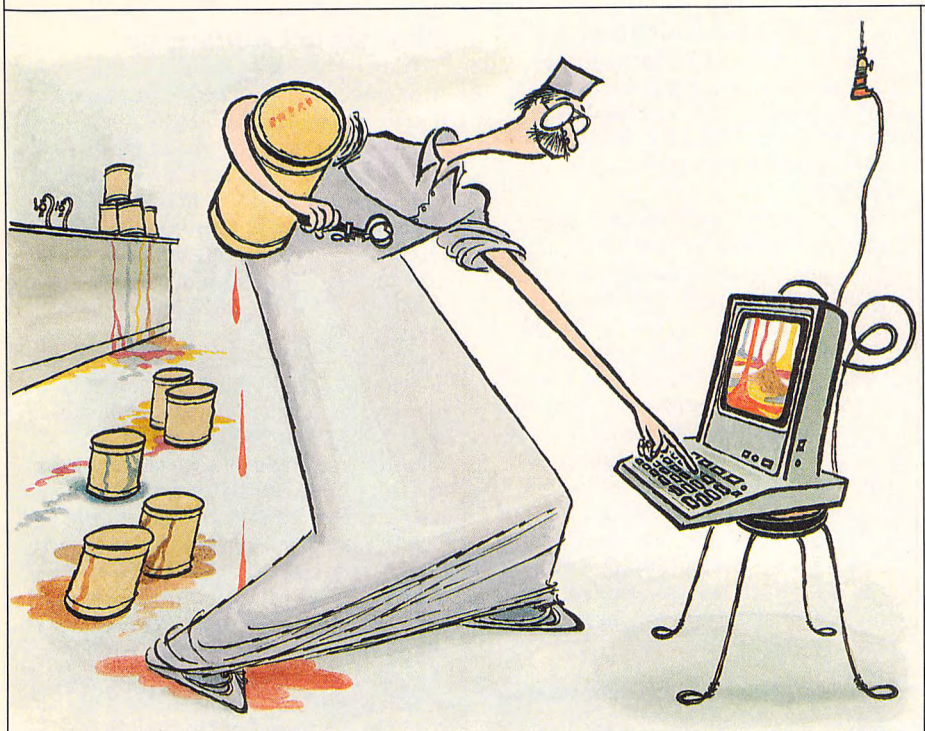
by Cathryn Conroy

Arnold Roth

Research used to mean trudging off to the library armed with a stack of note cards, a sharp pencil and the dreary thought that your weekend would be lost in the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*. Times have changed. Now when you need to research a question for business, school or your own personal information, you can count the time spent in *minutes* rather than days.

Online reference services have dramatically changed the basic approach to research. No matter how simple or complex the question, you can probably find the answers online in less time than it would take you to drive to the library.

Sound incredible? Following are four research questions that will tap into the best databases CompuServe has to offer, showing you firsthand the tips and techniques of online research.



It's your business

You may have thought you left research back in those ivy-covered school buildings, but a basic part of good business is finding out what the competition is up to as well as planning for the future.

Here is a hypothetical business situation I researched: A budding entrepreneur wants to open an ice cream parlor in Charlottesville, Va., but realizes he knows little about his chances for success. On the surface, it seems like it will work. After all, Charlottesville is home to the University of Virginia and is a prime tourist location. But before investing thousands of dollars on a hunch, he wants real information on how to market ice cream as well as the sales potential of this small but booming town at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Before buying even one ice cream scoop, he should turn to IQuest, a massive database that serves as a gateway to more than 900 publications, databases and indexes spanning business, government, research, news, popular entertainment and sports. In short, IQuest has it all. It's an easy service to use, with menus directing you and asking you questions that will guide the search process.

There are several ways to use IQuest, and the best way is determined by what you are researching and how much you know about your subject. For instance, you can let IQuest pick the database to be searched (IQuest-I), you can choose it (IQuest-II) or you can let IQuest conduct a scan of all the databases in a subject area and tell you the ones that have the information you need. Obviously, if you know exactly what you want, you should pick the database. Letting IQuest do the work for you, however, works best if you are researching a broad subject that could draw on several sources.

In the case of the ice cream parlor, it's best to let IQuest make the selection. Even though the system is doing most of the work, you still have to help. Devising keywords that accurately describe your research problem will make the search work best.

TIP

Omit common words such as "of," "the," "for," "at," "by" and "to." Be specific; use "wine cooler" instead of "alcoholic beverages." You can broaden the search with the use of OR (such as "astronaut or cosmonaut") or narrow the search by using AND (such as "astronaut and Gemini"). Use a / to create a wildcard ending, such as DEMOC/ for searches on democracy, democratic and Democrats.

When I researched this question, I let IQuest select the database. Following the menus, in IQuest-I, I directed the system to search marketing databases. Now came the hard part. I was instructed to choose the kinds of publications I wanted to search. My choices were varied and included professional journals, newsletters and books. Using the keyword "ice cream," I selected newsletters on advertising, and got no "hits." The next time around I selected professional journals and was rewarded with 64 hits.

Still, I felt that I was only scratching the surface and wondered what I should do next. In IQuest terms, that should read SOS. By simply typing SOS, you will be instantly connected with a expert researcher in Bryn Mawr, Pa., the headquarters of Telebase Systems Inc., the information provider for IQuest. In addition to being a free service (that's right, connect time only—no surcharge for all the help you want), the best thing about SOS is the researchers' ability to get you to ask them the right questions.

For instance, when I typed SOS, I asked Lise, the researcher who answered my call, why I wasn't getting the option for full-text retrieval. After explaining that that service was only available in some databases, she suggested a database to search. That meant I would head back to the main menu and select IQuest-II. She told me every menu item to pick so the end result would be articles on ice cream marketing. I hit gold with 289 articles.

TIP

Use SOS. Don't be afraid to ask for help. SOS will save you not only a lot of frustration but also time and money. You'll get exactly what you want—and fast.

There is a surcharge associated with searches in IQuest, but you are only surcharged for the search transactions you perform online: connect time is only CompuServe regular rates. If your first search does not reap any "hits," there is no charge; however, subsequent searches with no hits are assessed $1. If the search does provide information, the usual charge is $7, although some databases will carry a surcharge of as much as $25 and others as little as $4. The fee covers the first 10 bibliographic citations in a bibliographic database or the first 15 titles in a full-text database

with one article reprint included in the initial charge. Unlike some services, however, you don't need to worry about how much you are accruing in surcharges because IQuest displays them frequently throughout your search. (Remember, this running total does *not* include connect time.)

After exiting IQuest, I looked for demographic information on the sales potential of the Charlottesville ice cream parlor. Extensive demographic information is provided online, ranging from a specific street corner to the general characteristics of the entire country.

To learn more about the population of Charlottesville—and whether the residents were the ice cream eating type—I turned to the Neighborhood ZIP Reports. Detailed instructions on how to use the reports—which include demographic, civic, gift and sports/leisure reports—as well as sample reports are provided at no extra charge. I selected the demographics report and the sports/leisure report. By typing in the Charlottesville ZIP code, I received detailed information on the populace, including their ages, occupations, types of households, occupied housing units, average home values and more. The sports/leisure report told me the sports activities that most occupy the time of Charlottesville residents (racquetball and running headed the list).

Charlottesville is the largest city in Albemarle County; it is surrounded by breathtaking countryside that is dotted with small towns. Many of the residents of the small towns and those who live in the mountains (remember Walton's Mountain?—it's here) come into Charlottesville to shop and eat out. Because of this, I felt it was expedient to learn more about the county's population and ran a demographics report from the US-State-County database. This report gives the same type of information as the Neighborhood ZIP report except it presented a broadbased view of a larger area. Both types of reports carry a surcharge of $10 for each one.

Now that I had analyzed the area, I wanted to analyze the market. Business Demographics is a database designed to help businesses do just that. Two types of reports are available: the Business-to-Business Report, which includes information on all broad Standard Industrial Classification categories; and the Advertisers Service Report, which includes data on businesses that make up the SICs for retail trade. Reports can be requested by ZIP code, county, state, metropolitan area, Arbitron TV markets, Nielsen TV markets or the entire United States. For my research, I chose to have the reports issued by ZIP code.

In an attempt to analyze business patterns, both reports list types of retail trade, the total number of businesses and the number of employees.

Finally, I wanted to know the sales potential of an ice cream store in Charlottesville. SUPERSITE offers this kind of detail in reports that range in price from $50 to $100. Because there was no actual storefront being considered, I chose to cover the entire Charlottesville area. However, SUPERSITE can also issue reports based on a particular latitude and longitude, giving detailed information on sales potential at a particular street corner.

TIP

For this option, select "Geometric Selection by Circle." CACI Inc., the information provider, will compute the latitude and longitude for a fee of $10 if you know the names of the streets at the nearest intersection.

By simply following the menu selections, I instructed the system to produce the report I wanted. For a charge of $50, I was given valuable information on the population, median household income, the ice cream products consumed at home and away, and the growth rate for both from 1980 to 1987. I learned how much was spent in total on ice cream products, how much each household spent and the annual per capita expenditures.

COST

I learned that Charlottesville is a great place to open an ice cream parlor. The IQuest search took 34 minutes, while the demographics searches took just 18 minutes. Connect time (at 2400 baud) cost $10.83; the surcharges amounted to $26 for IQuest, $20 for the Neighborhood ZIP reports, $10 for the US-State-County report, $20 for the Business Demographics reports and $50 for the sales potential report. Total fees: $136.83.

Be a smart consumer

Major purchases are usually done with care. Many consumers conduct research first. In many cases, that research can be performed online.

Once again, let's take a hypothetical question to research. A woman who operates a home-based business wants to upgrade her CP/M-based computer system, but she cannot decide whether to buy an IBM PC, PC-compatible or an Apple Macintosh.

The first reference stop for this question is IQuest, and this time I'll rely on the newest IQuest search feature: SmartSCAN. The system will scan the hundreds of IQuest databases and zero in on the handful that will have the desired information. In this case, I instructed IQuest to find information from the "computer" area (SCAN COMPUTER is the command). Following the menus, I further narrowed the search to "general computer use" and then requested to see the list of databases that would be used in the scan. These included Online Microcomputer Software Guide and Directory, ABI/INFORM, Microcomputer Index, Computer Database, PTS New Product Announcements and more.

TIP

Viewing this list is optional, but seeing it could help you select the one or two databases you want to use in your research. Each database or journal is described in full, including such information as topics covered, dates available and the frequency of updates.

The search was defined in keywords: (IBM PC/ OR IBM PERSONAL COMPUTER) AND APPLE/ AND MACINTOSH/. The SmartSCAN search of 10 journals turned up more than 2,300 hits! At this point, I've accumulated a $7 surcharge, and I will be assessed a surcharge for each database I choose to retrieve references from. The first one I chose to see was PTS Marketing and Advertising, an abstract database that carries an $8 surcharge above the regular $7 fee, for a total of $15. There were 24 hits in this database, and the most recent 10 were displayed. From there, I selected the three articles for which I wanted to read the abstracts and learned such things as:

- "The Macintosh is the easiest professional computer to learn and use. The

main problem with the computer, in addition to its relatively high price, is that it is incompatible with the IBM and its peripherals."

- "The Leading Edge Model D is the best IBM-compatible."
- "For those who do not require a traditional approach to computer use or IBM compatibility, the Macintosh can be a better choice than the IBM PC."

Microsearch, a searchable CompuServe database devoted exclusively to microcomputer information, is another source. With more than 20,000 abstracts of product reviews from more than 200 microcomputing publications and product literature from some 4,500 manufacturers of software and hardware, Microsearch allows you to compare and contrast specific brands in a matter of minutes. The database is divided into three categories: software, hardware/services/accessories information and a directory of manufacturers. Searches can be conducted within software and hardware categories by subject, micro or operating system, product name, manufacturer, publication, date or any combination of these. In addition, abstracts may be searched by document type, which allows you to select magazine product reviews or product literature straight from the manufacturer.

TIP

Excellent, detailed search tips are presented on the opening menu. It would be a good idea to first print or download these and study them offline.

In this example on the IBM PC/Macintosh debate, I decided to search in the Hardware, Services and Accessories Information category by product name.

TIP

You must type in the exact product name to get results. For instance, "Macintosh" yields no articles, but "Apple Macintosh" yields 37. A complete listing of all products reviewed in Microsearch is available on the main menu. I then started typing in the various names of the computers for which I wanted reviews, including the IBM PC, Apple Macintosh and a handful of PC-compatible machines—Leading Edge PC, Leading Edge Model D and Compaq. My search yielded a low of 10 articles (on the Leading Edge Model D) to a high of 77 articles (on the Compaq, which was also the least well defined of the group). The article title is presented in a menu; simply select the one that sounds interesting to view the abstract.

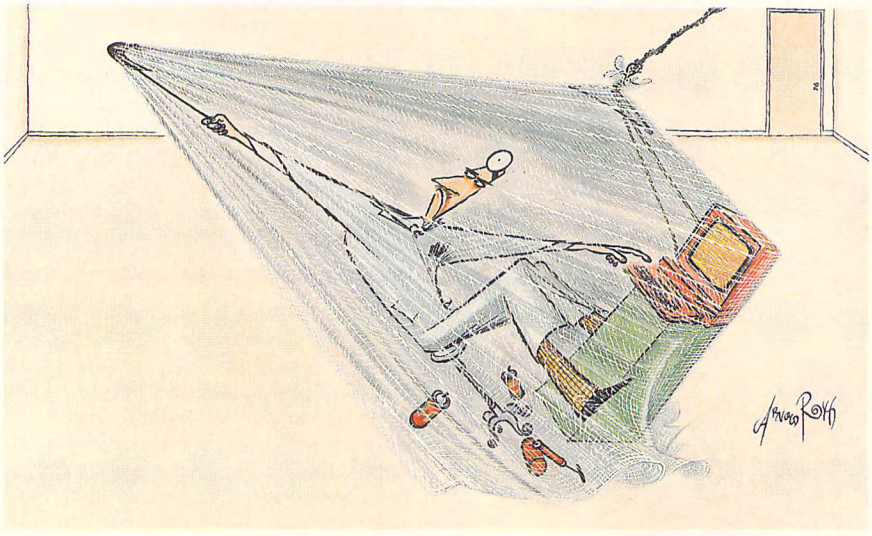
The abstracts are complete; in many cases, you won't even need to track down and read the full text of the article. You can simply go offline to find it, as full-text is not included in Microsearch. In addition to all the usual publishing information (such as article title, magazine, date and author), the abstract features a rather lengthy summary of the review. Abstracts in most databases are just a few sentences long, but with Microsearch 18 to 20 lines is not uncommon. Expanding on the search, I selected the Software category in an attempt to determine which computer would be better for desktop publishing. More than 300 articles were available on the topic, so I chose to narrow the search (just follow the menus to do this). Since the whole point of the search is to compare the two computers, I instructed the system to find articles on Ventura Publisher and then expanded the search to find articles on PageMaker. I ended up with a list of 86 articles, several of which compared the two.

TIP

When you expand or narrow the search, you are automatically taken back to the initial hardware or software menu, making it appear that you are starting anew. In fact, you are not; you are still working with the same selection set.

COST

The SmartSCAN search took 11 minutes, while online time in Microsearch was 21 minutes (and this included downloading the introductory menu's search tips, terms and microcomputer and publication indexes). The IQuest surcharges totaled $28, while the Microsearch surcharge of $10 an hour added up to $3.50. Total charges: $38.17.



Ask the electronic doctor

Although the best source of medical information is your physician, there are times when you may want more information than he or she can provide during an office visit.

PaperChase, an easy-to-use version of the National Library of Medicine's prestigious database MEDLINE, contains more than 5 million references from 4,000 journals. In addition, another 25,000 references are indexed and abstracted each month. Although the database is menu-driven and fairly straightforward, it is a good idea to download or print the instructions offered in the introductory menu before venturing into a search. Once you do get online, you'll discover the system is trying to help you every step of the way. For instance, each time PaperChase asks a question, it usually provides the most likely answer followed by double slashes. If that is indeed your answer, just press the Return key. If not, answer the way you want.

The best way to conduct a PaperChase search is to create lists of references for each keyword or phrase in your search question. Type in the most relevant word first, let the system conduct the search, type in the second word, let the system search and so on. After all the keywords are entered, you can combine the lists and PaperChase will find references that include all your keywords.

The question I devised for this search is "Can AIDS be transmitted by mosquitoes?" I created two lists of references—one for AIDS and one for mosquitoes. To create the lists, you type in a title word, medical subject heading, subheading, author's name, journal title, year of publication or language of publication.

TIP

Be as specific as possible when devising your search terms. The National Library of Medicine uses very specific terms, and in many cases a more general word will not encompass the specific one you want. For instance, if you are looking for something on the fingernail, do not use the search term "hand." Say exactly what you want using single words; try to avoid phrases. For a list of medical subject headings, type MESH at the LOOK FOR prompt.

The first menu offers several choices, including the opportunity to begin a new search or pick up on an old one. (PaperChase remembers what you have done and gives you the opportunity to continue it.) In this case, I was beginning a new search, so I selected that item. The first question PaperChase asks is LOOK FOR. I typed in AIDS and told the system it was a medical subject heading. PaperChase responded with 12 choices that fit the descriptor "AIDS," including hearing aids, pharmaceutic aids and the one I wanted: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. I selected this choice and was told there were more than 8,000 references. This became List A.

I hit the Return key, and the system again asked LOOK FOR, to which I responded MOSQUITOES. Some 2,700 references were given. At the next LOOK FOR prompt I hit the Return key instead of answering and was given a menu, which offered me a chance to combine the two lists and find the references common to both of them. (This can be done with as many different lists as you want.) This time the system turned up exactly what I needed —seven articles dealing with AIDS and mosquitoes. (By the way, the answer is no—AIDS cannot be transmitted by mosquitoes.)

It will take a minute or so for PaperChase to actually combine the lists. I got impatient and asked the system to print out the seven abstracts. It politely told me that the list was being compiled, and if I did nothing, I would be given the option to print when I completed the search.

TIP

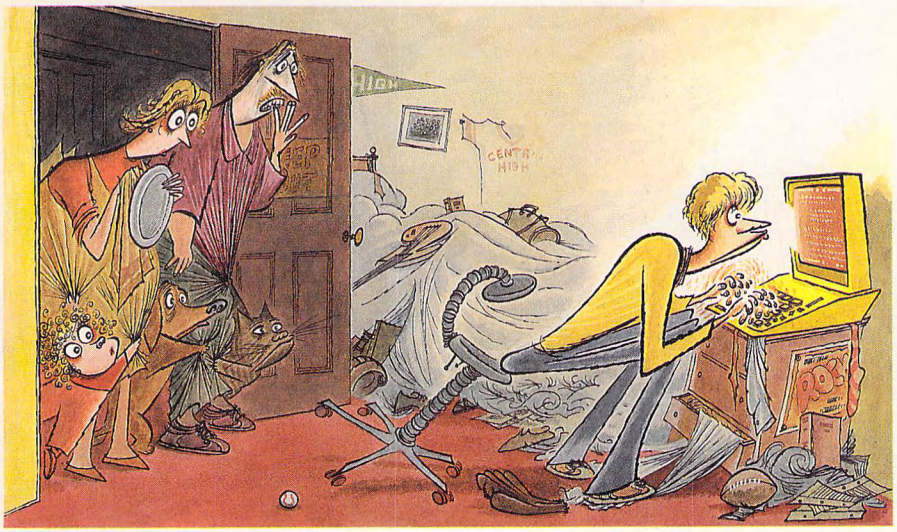
Like IQuest, PaperChase is sophisticated but friendly. If you need help, you can call toll-free 800/722-2075 weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. EST and speak with a physician or professional researcher who will offer suggestions and answer your questions. You can also leave a message online.

PaperChase has just published a new manual and is beginning publication of a bi-monthly newsletter. If you would like to receive these, call the 800 number listed above.

The surcharges for this database are $18/hour from 6 p.m. to 8 a.m. local time and any time on the weekends and $24/hour from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. local time weekdays. Although the charges are not displayed during the search, the number of minutes you have been online in PaperChase is prominently displayed and continuously tallied so you will have some idea of the charges you are accumulating.

COST

For this search, I was actually in PaperChase just five minutes, although I spent an additional seven minutes downloading search tips from the introductory menu (there are no surcharges for this). The connect time fees were $2.50, the surcharge was $1.50 for a total charge of $4.



Back to school

Although it may seem extravagant at first glance, using online reference services is an ideal way to research high school or college term papers. Online research is quite affordable and the savings in time can be extraordinary. More important, the quality of the information retrieved is often much higher than can be found in a library.

I devised a question that a high school student might be researching to demonstrate the affordability and ease of use of online reference services. A high school junior studying sociology has been asked to write a paper on the future of the American family in an attempt to determine social trends that may occur by the time he is married and has children, in about 10 to 15 years.

CENDATA, a database of information from the Census Bureau, tells the story of our nation in numbers as well as words. One of the strongest features of CENDATA is that it not only offers scores of numbers, tables and statistics but also explains what they mean in plain English. CENDATA is a diverse database, offering important economic indicators minutes after they are officially released in Washington, summaries of various census reports on population, business, agriculture, manufacturing and much more.

To research this question, a number of sections proved beneficial. Current press releases from the bureau are online. Although they change frequently, there is a good chance one or more might be pertinent to your research question. I found several, including "Record Number of Americans Moved, Census Reports," "Household and Family Characteristics: 1986" and "Statistical Brief: Where the Children Are." Another area that offers news reports is Census User News where I located two recent reports on "Households and Families" and "Male-Female Work Differences."

All of this is fine for analyzing current mores, but to expand from there to determine trends takes a crystal ball—or the Census Bureau's projections through the year 2000 that are part of the section on Population Data.

Statistics on Americans' origins, growth, age, sex, income, education, voting patterns and more are found here. To research this question, I looked at information about where we are now in terms of working mothers, child care arrangements and unmarried couples living together as well as projections for the future, which are based on certain assumptions about future rates of household formation and population change. For a student who must document every piece of information, this database is ideal because CENDATA provides a detailed statement on its methods and assumptions.

Additional information is available in IQuest. Using a SmartSCAN on sociology, I was able to track down a number of articles from such journals as *Quality of Worklife*, *Family Resources* and *Social SciSearch*. The keywords for the search were (FAMILY LIFE OR FAMILIES) AND (TREND/ OR LIFESTYLE/). More than 1,000 hits resulted from the eight journals searched, giving me such articles as "Major social and demographic trends affecting young families," "Contemporary families and alternative lifestyles," and "Trends in distribution of children among households and families."

COST

I spent just 12 minutes in CENDATA (and downloaded 36 printed pages of information). Since there are no surcharges for using this database, the connect time fees of $2.50 were my only charges. The IQuest SmartSCAN search took eight minutes of connect time ($1.67) with surcharges of $25. Total charges: $29.17.

You've got the idea. Online research can save you time and money, allowing you to get the information you need without all the hassles. Thanks to online reference databases, research will never be the same.

Cathryn Conroy, a contributing editor of Online Today *who writes frequently about news/reference topics, is based in Gaithersburg, Md. Her CompuServe User ID number is 70007,417.*

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GO OLI or circle 17 on the Reader Service Form.

Quicken Searches with SmartSCAN

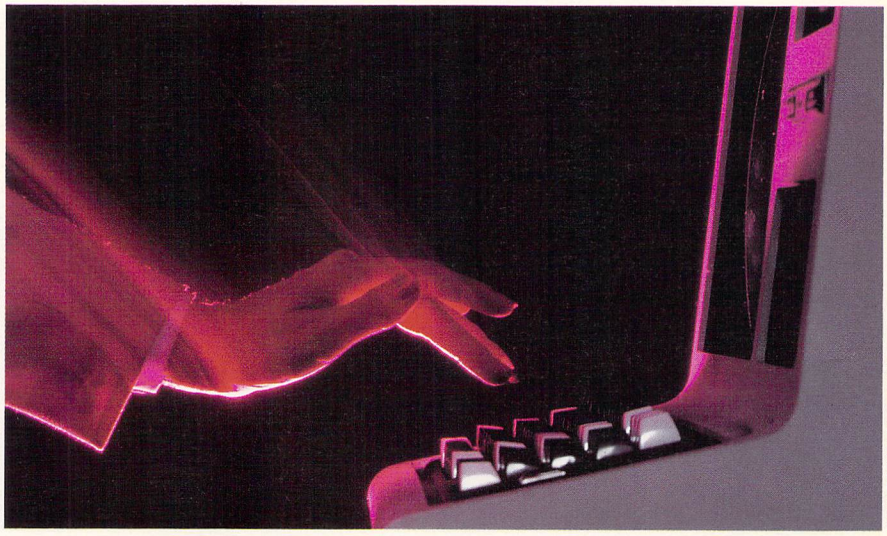
by Cathryn Conroy

IQuest, one of CompuServe's most sophisticated search databases, has just gotten easier to use. A new feature called SmartSCAN is now available, offering you greater research possibilities while at the same time simplifying the process.

Before SmartSCAN, you had to search IQuest's more than 900 databases, publications and indexes one at a time. Needless to say, there are many research situations where more than one database may offer important information. SmartSCAN allows you to tap into all of the relevant ones in one easy search process.

Once you access IQuest to begin a search, you will be presented with a menu that will ask IQuest to pick the database (IQuest-I), allow you to pick the database (IQuest-II) or scan selected databases (SmartSCAN, option 3 on the menu). To initiate SmartSCAN, all you have to do is tell the system the broad area you want to search. (A complete listing of these areas is available by typing SCAN TOPIC).

Let's create a hypothetical search on the marketing of wine coolers—a highly competitive area with polar bears, two elderly gentlemen thanking you for your support and '60s-type beach bums leading the pack. To begin the search, ask IQuest to scan the databases that cover the field of marketing. The command is SCAN MARKETING (the commands are part of the list of databases discussed above). The system will present a menu of options, including an option to see an explanation of scanning, list the databases in the marketing scan or start a scan. In this case, they include such resources as BRS Information Technologies Inc.'s ABI/INFORM; and FINIS, PTS MARS, PTS New Product Announcements and PTS PROMT, all provided by DIALOG Information Services Inc. Each database or journal is described in full and includes such information as topics covered, dates available and the frequency of updates. If you are not familiar with the databases, it's a good idea to take the time to view this, since you will be better able to determine the databases you want to retrieve information from.



COMSTOCK INC./Tom Grill

To begin the scan, simply select from the menu "Start scan." At this point, the system will prompt you for the exact marketing topic. WINE COOLER/ is entered here. (The slash is used to allow for various endings of a word, such as -er, -s, -ing.) Sit back and relax while IQuest does the work, scanning the marketing databases for articles on wine coolers.

In minutes, you'll be presented with a list of references found in each database. Some may yield nothing, while others could yield hundreds of articles. In addition, you'll be told what kind of information you will retrieve, be it full text, abstracts or references. Each scan is charged as a search. All IQuest charges are displayed as they occur, and a running total of the charges is periodically displayed.

In our example, PTS Marketing and

Scans at a Glance

Here's a list of the topics for which the SmartSCAN capability is available through IQuest. To access IQuest, type GO IQUEST.

Accounting
Aerospace
AG-Food
Agriculture
Archeology
Art
Banking
Biology
Chemical
Chemistry
Civil
Computer
Construction
Dance
Drugs
Earth-Sciences
Economics
Education
Electrical
Energy
Energy-Industry
Film
Finance
Fire
Geo-Sciences
Government
Govt-Defense
History
Insurance
Lasers
Law
Library
Literature
Management
Manufacturing
Marketing
Materials
Mathematics
Mechanical
Medicine
Metals
Movies
Music
Nursing
Optics
Patents
Petroleum
Pharmacy
Philosophy
Physics
Property
Psychology
Religion
Retail
Services
Sociology
Tax
Theater
Ticker
Transportation
TV-Radio
Wholesale

Advertising yielded 530 hits and PTS PROMT brought in 459 abstracts. Since that is an enormous amount of information, let's select one for this demonstration that yielded a little less. PTS New Product Announcements found six full-text articles. When you select this database from the menu, the system will present the article title, date, dateline and word count for each. To retrieve references from a particular database carries the normal IQuest search charge. Since this is a full-text database, you can retrieve the full text of one article you choose as part of that fee. Follow the menus to retrieve the full text or to review the headlines again. (In the case of the PTS New Product Announcements database, there is an additional $8 charge for a total charge of $15. When a database carries a surcharge above the regular IQuest charge, you will be told before accessing it.)

After you examine the abstracts, articles or references from one of the databases, you will be given an opportunity to select information from one of the others searched in the scan. Remember, accessing each database is charged as a search, and a running total will be kept. (Note: this total includes only IQuest charges; CompuServe connect charges are not included.)

By using SmartSCAN, as opposed to the other methods of searching on IQuest, you will be able to focus on those databases that have the most articles on the subject you are researching. You won't waste time (and money) on futile searches. SmartSCAN zeroes in on exactly what you want from the hundreds of possibilities available.

There are times, however, when you should not use SmartSCAN. If, for instance, you know the exact database you want to search—you may need a book review from *Book Review Digest*, provided by H.W. Wilson Co.—it is wise to go directly there via IQuest-II.

"The SmartSCAN feature was added to IQuest to promote successful searching," explains Amy Peck, user documentation coordinator for Telebase Systems Inc., the information provider of IQuest. "One database alone often will not yield the answer or give complete information. The SmartSCAN feature permits one-stop shopping and serves as a database finder enabling the user to do a more comprehensive search."

For more information, type GO IQUEST.

Book Author Adopts Online Research

When Christine and John Adamec decided to adopt an infant, they discovered a lack of books on the subject, prompting Christine, a professional writer, to write one herself.

There ARE Babies to Adopt: A Resource Guide for Prospective Parents (Mills and Sanderson, 1987) is the only book on the market dedicated solely to helping people who want to adopt infants. The book is packed with helpful hints on domestic adoption, international adoption, private adoption and issues ranging from locating an agency to coping with foreign travel for international adopters.

Much of Adamec's research was performed in IQuest (GO IQUEST). She found the latest on adoption news and issues by searching newspapers throughout the United States on the National Newspaper Index and current magazines through Magazine ASAP. "In addition, these sources gave me names of parent support groups, leading me to adoptive parents to interview," she says.

Adamec also used Dissertation Abstracts Online and the Social Services Index to obtain recent studies on why women place their babies up for adoption, the motivations of adoptive parents and other topics. For a chapter on artificial insemination, *in vitro* fertilization and surrogate motherhood, she searched a variety of medical and scientific databases for current information on alternative ways to conceive a child.

"Online reference services save tremendous time and provide access to information sources that would be difficult or impossible to reach the old way—by going to the local library. I still love the library, but it can't give me what CompuServe can offer when it comes to timely, broad and in-depth information."

John Adamec

CompuServe made book better: *Adamec*

Adamec estimates that had she conducted the research in the library, it would have taken 60 hours (35 hours of travel and 25 hours of research) compared to the five hours she spent on CompuServe.

"Sure, I could have written *There ARE Babies to Adopt* without CompuServe, but I think my book is far better because of this online research tool," says Adamec.

— CDC

How to Locate Databases

To access the databases described in this article, use the following commands:

Business Demographics	GO DEM-840
CENDATA	GO CENDATA
IQuest	GO IQUEST
Microsearch	GO MICROSEARCH
Neighborhood ZIP Reports	GO NEIGHBOR
PaperChase	GO PAPERCHASE
SUPERSITE	GO SUPERSITE
US-State-County Reports	GO DEMOGRAPHICS

New Utility Files Found in Forums

The data libraries in CompuServe's forums are filled with thousands of programs and textfiles. The following are a few of the files uploaded to the data libraries in recent months. For a more up-to-date list of uploads, check the "Uploads" columns in *Online Today Daily Edition* by typing GO OLT-3700 at any prompt.

AI EXPERT FORUM
(GO AIE-100)

Speech Experiment—A phoneme (speech) recognition system using a Generalized Delta Rule neural network. Macintosh version is PHONEM.PIT in Data Library 11. IBM version is PHOIBM.ARC in Data Library 11.

Prolog Programming—Sample programs from the new book *Prolog Programming In Depth,* by Covington, Nute and Vellino. Most programs will run in any Edinburgh-like Prolog (not Turbo). File INDEPT.ARC in Data Library 3.

ASTRONOMY FORUM
(GO ASTROFORUM)

Astronomy Networking—An article by Carolyn Collins Petersen, publications chair for the International Planetarium Society, which describes computer networking for astronomy interests. File ARTICL.TXT in Data Library 0.

COMMODORE MUSIC, GRAPHICS AND GAMES FORUM
(GO CBMART)

Graphic Assault—Updated and improved Graphic Assault System for the Commodore 64 and 128. Commodore 128 file is GAS128.IMG and Commodore 64 file is GAS64.IMG, both in Data Library 10.

Fortune Cookie—A program to give fortune cookie-style messages randomly from more than 65,000 possibilities. File COOKIE.IMG in Data Library 11.

CONSUMER ELECTRONICS FORUM
(GO CEFORUM)

CD Database—A searchable database for IBM PCs and compatibles, which lists all CBS compact discs. Searches by artist, album and type of music. Quarterly updates added to the database. File CBSCD.ARC in Data Library 5.

COCO FORUM
(GO COCO)

Terminal Program—A new version of Mikeyterm, a terminal program for the 64K CoCo 1/2 or the CoCo 3. For a list of changes and additions to the new version of Mikeyterm, see file MTADD.TXT in Data Library 6. To see a list and brief description of files relating to Mikeyterm, see file MTERM.CAT in Data Library 6.

COOKS ONLINE
(GO COOKS)

Computer Diet Aids—Elizabeth Clark writes about using your computer as a dieting aid. File DIET01.TXT in Data Library 11.

CROSSTALK FORUM
(GO XTALK)

CB Script—A Crosstalk Mk4 script to use with CompuServe's CB Simulator that automatically says "Hi" to anyone who accesses CB. Also features a reply editor, a line-recall buffer and more. File J2.ARC in Data Library 4.

IBM SOFTWARE FORUM
(GO IBMSW)

C Tutorial—A tutorial for learning "C" programming. File CTUT-1.ARC in Data Library 4 contains all of the text for the tutorial. File CTUT-2.ARC in Data Library 4 contains all of the sample programs for tutorial uses.

Fast Text Searcher—A revised version of Chris Dunford's text search utility. Like DOS's FIND but smaller and much faster with multifile capabilities. File FGREP.ARC in Data Library 3.

INVESTORS' FORUM
(GO INVFORUM)

Futures Broker—Transcript of a conference held with software writer and commodity broker Ray Kaider, who discusses the broker-client relationship in having a futures account. File KAIDER.CO (ASCII version) or KAIDER.ARC (archived version) in Data Library 4.

MAUG MAC FUN FORUM
(GO MACFUN)

Patterns—A new version of Pattern Maker for the Macintosh with improved capabilities for creating patterns on the screen. Creates many types of graphic displays, from graphs and reports to unusual greeting cards. File PATTER.BIN in Data Library 5.

MAUG MAC PRO FORUM
(GO MACPRO)

Map With a Purpose—A map of the continental United States for the Macintosh. Shows area codes and time zones. Requires MacDraw to print. File AREACO.SIT in Data Library 8.

MILITARY VETERANS FORUM
(GO VETFORUM)

Fonda Tapes—Transcripts of Jane Fonda's now-famous anti-American broadcasts from North Vietnam during the Vietnam War era. To see a list of the textfiles containing the transcripts, type BRO JFTLKJ* at the Data Library 3 prompt.

SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY FORUM
(GO SCIFI)

Oz Fan Club—Information on the International "Wizard of Oz" Fan Club. File OZCLUB.TXT in Data Library 10.

SCUBA FORUM
(GO DIVING)

Sea Hunt—The listing of all stations in North America airing the new "Sea Hunt" TV series. Given are stations, days and times. File SEAHUN.LIS in Data Library 1.

SPACE FORUM
(GO SPACEFORUM)

Shuttle Electronics—A detailed description of the entire Space Shuttle electrical system, including all electrical power generation systems. File SHUTTL.PWR in Data Library 1.

TANDY PROFESSIONAL FORUM
(GO TANDYPRO)

Screen Clock—A memory-resident utility for the Tandy 2000. Puts 24-hour time in upper-right-hand corner of the screen. File KLOK2K.COM in Data Library 9.

WORK AT HOME FORUM
(GO WORK)

Information Sources—A series of bimonthly newsletters from Information and Research Brokers of New England. Includes tips for finding sources of low-cost information. Type BRO IRB* at the Data Library 4 prompt.

WORDPERFECT SUPPORT GROUP
(GO WPSG)

TAPCIS—TAPCIS, the automated communications program for use by IBM PCs and compatibles on CompuServe forums and with EasyPlex. Shareware from Howard Benner. Program cuts online time through built-in automated scripts. File TAPCIS.ARC in Data Library 12.

Label Maker—A WordPerfect solution to the problem of printing mailing labels on a single sheet, three-across label form on a LaserJet or similar printer. This file contains a series of chained WordPerfect macros and a sample mailing list database in WordPerfect merge format. File LABELS.ARC in Data Library 3.

David Peyton co-authored How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe *and* Advanced CompuServe for IBM PC Power Users. *His CompuServe User ID number is 76703,244.*

New File Transfer Protocols Available

CompuServe has added two new file transfer protocols to the forum data libraries: a new version of CompuServe B protocol and Kermit.

The enhanced version of the existing CompuServe B protocol saves time and money, and is faster in downloading than XMODEM on any other network. The new B protocol includes a list of options that the CompuServe host and the remote computer terminal program "negotiate" with each other at the beginning of a file transfer.

One option includes using the XMODEM style "CRC" (Cyclic Redundancy Check) error-checking instead of the method that the original B protocol uses. Another option changes size, increasing the efficiency of transfers over all types of links.

The most important option allows the protocol to use "packet send aheads" in a transfer. By enabling "packet send aheads" you can stop the CompuServe end of the protocol from waiting to receive a "packet received OK" message from the remote user's system before it sends the next packet from the file. This option removes the long pauses that often occurred in the original B protocol.

CompuServe has completed tests where files were transferred over the TYMNET network at 1200 baud. The throughput, the rate at which information effectively uses the bauds it is transferred at, was measured to be 46 percent using the original B protocol, but this increased to 96 percent with the same file using the new B. This throughput will be as effective as using the CompuServe network. The old and new versions of B are fully compatible.

Kermit is ideal for use over "problem" networks that cannot handle the transfer of eight-bit characters. If you are on such a network, you have been able to use the existing XMODEM or CompuServe B protocols to perform file downloads.

Versions of Kermit are available for most computers, including mainframe and mini-computers.

All the protocols available on CompuServe now support "recoverable disconnects." A recoverable disconnect occurs if there is an interruption in CompuServe's network and the network is able to reroute the connection through other nodes.

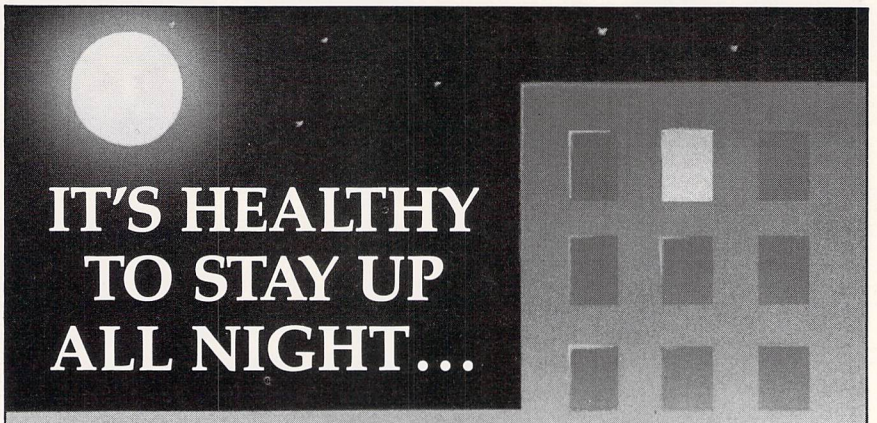
If one of these disconnects occurs in the middle of a file transfer and the connection can be rerouted, the transfer will continue from where it left off. (The "Type Control Q..." message is suppressed.)

If this occurs in other areas of the CompuServe Information Service, you will usually see the "Type Control Q to resume" message.

A transfer cannot continue, however, if there is any disconnection requiring you to redial your call to CompuServe.

A growing number of public domain and shareware communications programs now support the new protocols.

You can find these programs in the forums for your computer. For a list of forums, type FIND FORUMS at any prompt.



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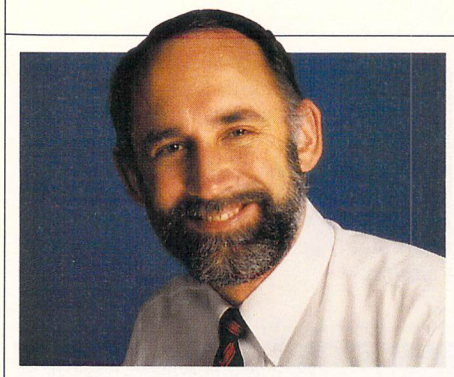
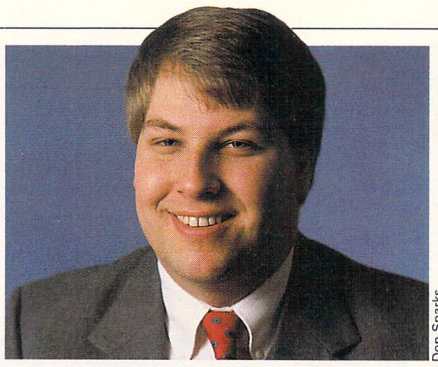


Improving shareware's image: *Button*



Don Sparks

Author of Automenu: *Magee*

Computing Creations

Software Developers Upload Programs for All

by Michael Naver

"Shareware" may be the computer industry's major contribution to imaginative marketing, and on CompuServe you'll find evidence that "sharing is caring."

Unlike commercial software, shareware may be freely copied and passed from user to user. But the author retains all copyrights to the program and can ask or require users to "register" (buy) the product after using it.

Shareware is generally low in cost compared to commercial programs, averaging $50 to $75. But it is not the same as "public domain" or "free" software, with which it is sometimes confused. Free software is given away by its authors, along with any obligation on their part to support the product.

There's no exact count, but CompuServe's forums contain thousands of shareware programs, which the authors encourage you to download and try. Appropriately enough, CompuServe also provides an electronic meeting place for the nation's serious shareware developers to compare notes.

Some of the most successful shareware authors are leaders of the Association of Shareware Professionals, as their online "trade association" is called. Chairman is Jim Button, president of Buttonware and author of the popular database program PC File. President is Marshall Magee, of Magee Enterprises, author of Automenu, a menu system primarily for hard-disk computers. Their products are among the handful of shareware programs that have grossed more than $1 million.

Other examples of hot shareware are Tom Smith's ProComm, a communications program; Bruce Buzbee's QubeCalc, a spreadsheet program; Bob Wallace's PC-Write, a word processor; and Howard Benner's TAPCIS, a communications program that saves online time for CompuServe subscribers. All four authors are ASP members.

"Shareware developers feel at home on CompuServe," says Sharon Baker, CompuServe product manager. "They provide their software and their support mechanisms online. From the user's point of view, you can be sure you're getting good software here."

Shareware can be found in just about any CompuServe hardware or software forum, from Tandy to Atari to Macintosh to WordPerfect. It's also on professional forums, such as the Public Relations and Marketing Forum. But there's probably more shareware in the IBM forums than anywhere else—programs numbering in the thousands, says Don Watkins, forum administrator. "The bottom line is that price does not necessarily dictate quality," Watkins adds.

Button, whose Buttonware shareware is available in the PC Vendors Forum, says CompuServe is the one place guaranteed to provide the latest version of his programs. "It would be impossible for us to keep current versions on all the bulletin boards around the country," he notes.

He and other shareware developers founded their association in April 1987. "With members scattered all over the world, we needed a place where we could meet electronically. We picked CompuServe, where most of our members have access," says Button.

"We want to improve the image of shareware in the industry. One way is to make sure that our own members are meeting at least minimum standards and following good business practices. For example, we encourage truth in advertising."

Also, the association discourages members from offering "crippleware," or demo software that's not fully functional. Some commercial software falls in this category.

Another aim of the group, Magee says, is to provide better education to end users, "basically to help the shareware industry. For instance, we help members bring their products to the attention of the press."

With tongue in cheek, the association boasts of holding "the longest meeting on record," with a continuous online discussion among members since the association's beginning. The meetings are for members only, not for shareware users or the public. Membership is growing fast, now numbering more than 90 shareware developers.

"Anyone who is a serious shareware developer, who is making money from shareware, is a member," Magee says.

What do developers talk about at their online meetings? "We might give names of specific companies that are ripping off shareware authors by making mass copies in violation of the copyright," Magee says. "Or someone might ask how to acquire a disk duplicator."

Or a member might inquire: "The federal government has asked me to bid on a site license. What's a reasonable amount for me to charge for the license?"

As in any trade association, members can be competitors, "but we're also pioneers with common aims," Button notes.

Most shareware sales come through word of mouth, through computer clubs, bulletin boards, and commercial online services such as CompuServe. Favorable notices in computer magazines also boost sales.

A good shareware program is often a real bargain for the budget-conscious computer shopper. The software might cost you a fraction of the cost of a comparable commercial program. Many shareware authors offer free updates, plus telephone and online support. Most authors impose a small charge to send you a new disk and a printed manual.

So if you're looking for new software for your computer, pick a CompuServe forum to start your search.

Michael Naver of Baltimore, Md., is editor of a newsletter advising corporate communicators and public relations counselors on uses of new technology. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,621.

Bartering business for buyers and sellers: *Boston Computer Exchange*

Micro Buyers, Sellers to Trade through BCE

by Kimberly H. Walker

With new versions of computers being introduced in rapid succession—such as the Macintosh Plus quickly followed by the Macintosh II and Macintosh SE—users seeking to upgrade to systems with greater memory and speed often have "mint condition" computers they want to sell. That is, if only they could find the right buyer and sell the computer at a good price.

Enter the Boston Computer Exchange, the country's largest used-computer brokerage firm and an upcoming service on CompuServe. The BCE maintains lists of buyers and sellers and puts them in touch with each other. When the transaction is completed, the BCE receives 10 percent of the proceeds.

"We created a business designed initially to serve the Boston marketplace by allowing people to tell us what they do or don't want," says Alexander Randall, BCE president. "There have been others who have done it by putting the hardware in a big warehouse. Our concept is different. That's why it fits so well with CompuServe."

Instead of handling the equipment, the BCE lets the computer buyer and seller work out a mutually agreeable way to evaluate and deliver it. "In the end, the buyer and seller will be in direct contact, with us as the intermediary," Randall says. "We'll say, 'Here's the phone number. Contact him directly to make sure it's what you want.'" Since the BCE has more than 1,000 used-equipment listings, updated daily, buyers and sellers in the same geographic area can often be matched, making the transaction convenient.

Other than advertising in local newspapers or at work or telling friends, an individual's opportunity to get the word out about a computer for sale is limited. The BCE, however, can disseminate this type of information to the widest possible audience of computer buyers. "What we want to do is organize this flow of information and make it possible for people to buy and sell," Randall says. "Keep your computer on your desk but tell me you want to sell, and I'll have an entry on the database that says 'sell.' I'll publish it everywhere I possibly can."

Those interested in using the BCE are asked to furnish such information as the type of computer to be bought or sold, number of disk drives, and type of monitor. The information is forwarded to the database manager on a daily basis and sent electronically to online services, such as CompuServe.

Because of the volume of transacted equipment, the BCE accumulates an enormous amount of information about the fair market price. From this information, the BoCoEx—a closing price report indicating the high and low values and closing prices of selected computer equipment—is published every Friday. "This way we know what prices people are willing to pay and accept," Randall says.

"A subscriber may have a used computer he wants to sell and no idea what to sell it for," says Mary Beth Zacks, CompuServe product manager. "He can go to this index and find out how it has been selling on the BCE. By doing this, he'll be able to price his computer."

Questions such as "What if the computer is broken?" or "What if the buyer writes a bad check?" are common, but there are solutions. Instead of sending the check to the seller, the buyer can send it to the BCE. In addition, the buyer has 24 hours to test the computer and check for faults. If there are none, the funds are released to the seller. If the seller worries that the buyer will write a bad check, he or she can retain the computer until the check clears, still in the hands of BCE. "It's not the fastest transaction, but it's the best," Randall says. "We've invented a method to allow strangers to trust one another."

Watch What's New for more information on the Boston Computer Exchange's availability on CompuServe.

Kimberly H. Walker is a free-lance writer based in Columbus, Ohio.

Bypass the Hassles

Online Automotive Services Put You in the Driver's Seat

by Jim McCann

Purchasing a new vehicle will never be the same for CompuServe subscribers who take a test drive of the online automotive services.

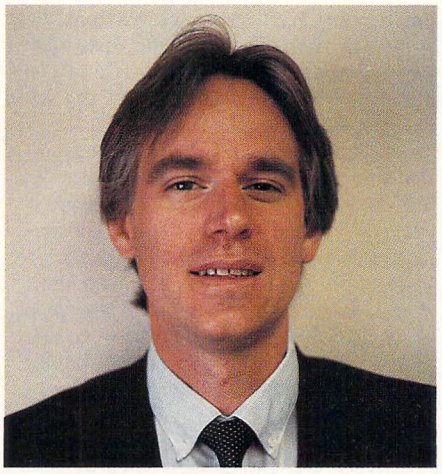
No more putting up with pushy salespersons, or gathering extensive information from automotive and consumer magazines. You'll quickly find the data you need by using your personal computer to access CompuServe.

The first stop is The New Car Showroom (GO NEWCAR), provided by Access Dynamics Inc., based in Concord, Mass. It features more than 850 cars, passenger vans, wagons and, starting this year, a complete line of large and small trucks. The database provides the latest specifications, features and pricing for 1988 models.

"We've found that people hate to go into a car showroom and be pressured by a salesperson," says Wayne R. Lilly, Access Dynamics spokesman and provider of The New Car Showroom. "With this service you can do comparative shopping at your own pace and time."

The various areas of The New Car Showroom allow you to view and compare different models of cars, vans and trucks to gain information to help make better buying decisions, according to Lilly. "By having the information with you when you go to purchase a car, you're in a better bargaining position," he says.

Online subscribers have the capability to look at different models one or two at a time in a side-by-side comparison. The information listed will include prices, selected standard and optional features, and important specifications for each model. If you wish to look at one model in detail, you may request that popular options be added to the base price of the vehicle.



Test drive online car shopping: *Lilly*

If you're having trouble deciding which car or truck would best suit your needs, select Option 4, "Let Us Help You Choose a Car," off the main menu to get help in narrowing down the models. You will be asked six questions concerning price range, an EPA class, fuel range and other attributes. There is a 40-cent surcharge if vehicles meeting your criteria are found.

"People spend a lot of money on a big-ticket item such as a car, so it's worth it for them to spend a little time looking through the information on CompuServe first," says Lilly.

The New Car Showroom also has a section that will help you calculate your monthly car payments. When you select Option 5, "Figure Your Monthly Payments," off the main menu, you're asked to specify the amount you wish to borrow, the interest rate and the term of the loan. Try several options to determine which one will work best for your budget. "One of the biggest advantages of electronic shopping is that you only need to see the information that is important to you," says Lilly.

Buick, Chevy and Ford enthusiasts can pull up to their own showrooms (GO FBU, GO CHV, GO FMC) to obtain specific information on each manufacturer's full line of vehicles, plus data on dealer locations, customer service, parts and service centers, and a section for feedback to the automotive companies.

There are plans to expand the number of showrooms by adding more American and foreign automotive companies, says Thomas Emmons, CompuServe account executive.

Buick will soon be adding another section—a car configurator that will let you look at a base vehicle and then add options and check the prices. You can then take the information to the dealership when you're ready to buy a vehicle.

In addition to finding car comparison information online, you can now buy or lease a vehicle without leaving the house. Dutchess CompuLease (GO DU) offers an alternative to the automobile market. Select the automobile of your choice and take comfort that all of the details on the order will run smoothly, resulting in only one trip to the dealership in your area to pick up the vehicle.

Before leasing a vehicle, you'll be asked to complete a basic credit history online. This information is then used to determine the proper financing agreement. Dutchess CompuLease offers you the opportunity to save money and still drive a new vehicle with a low monthly cost.

Another option you have in selecting, financing and picking up a new or leased vehicle is to access Autovision

(GO AV). "We promote Autovision as the intelligent way of buying or leasing a car," says Peter Conley, vice president for operations at the California-based company.

Autovision provides accurate quotes on most makes and models. You can save money with national buying power. Save time and make educated choices—for example, deciding between leasing and buying. You'll receive full factory warranty and authorized dealer service, and you can review the proposal in your home instead of at the dealership.

The trend of leasing is becoming ever more popular and should continue that way in the future, but leasing a car isn't for everyone, says Conley. Leasing would be advantageous for the user who did not drive in excess of 15,000 miles a year, kept the car for three years or less, is able to write it off as a expense, or just likes having a new car and keeping it while it is still under warranty, according to Conley. "A lot of new cars come with extended warranties. By leasing and changing cars, you are constantly under warranty, thereby reducing your repair costs," says Conley.

On the New Car Showroom main menu, you can select Option 7, "News Briefs/Crash Test Data," to get up-to-date information on current developments in the automotive world and results of crash test data for many of the popular models for a 25-cent surcharge. The crash test data is the result of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration New Car Assessment Program. Each year, the NHTSA tests approximately 25 cars in simulated head-on, 35 mph crashes using dummy devices in the cars to measure the force of impact to the head, chest and legs.

Results are listed in the section from lowest (best) impact force to highest (worst). "Even though not every car model is tested, CompuServe users will be able to match up their cars to similar ones that were tested and can get an idea of how their cars would perform in a crash test," says Lilly.

If you're not in the market for a new vehicle right now, you may be interested in other options on the Automotive menu: Black & Decker Powerline Network and the Stereo/Video Factory. Both offer automotive accessories that you can order online.

For Ford enthusiasts: *GO FMC*

Caring for cars: *Black & Decker*

At the Stereo Factory, choose from Pioneer stereos, speakers, amps and equalizers at low prices. Once the order is placed, you can pay by check, VISA, MasterCard or COD.

Black & Decker Powerline Network offers a list of auto accessories, such as car scrubbers, car vacuums and an auto care kit.

Auto racing enthusiasts also have their own area where they can get the latest racing information: the Auto Racing Forum (GO RACING). Those with professional motorsports interests are welcome to leave messages about their teams, sanctioned organizations, drivers and media.

For more information about what's going on in the automotive world, type GO AUTO.

Jim McCann is an Online Today *editorial intern from Ohio State University.*

How to Select a Car from Your Keyboard

If you're undecided about which car or truck would be best suited to your needs, try out the auto selector feature within the New Car Showroom (GO NEWCAR) by selecting Option 4, "Let Us Help You Choose a Car."

You'll be asked a series of questions online to help narrow down the field of models to those that meet your criteria—whether you're looking for a top-of-the-line sportscar or a subcompact economy model.

First, you'll be asked which vehicle size you prefer, ranging from subcompact to truck. You may decide that a mid-sized car is what you need; you'd select that number from the menu and press the Return key to record your answer and move on to the next question.

Then, the auto selector will ask the type of transmission, number of compartment doors and type of drive (front, rear or four-wheel drive) you prefer. For example, you may decide that a four-door, front-wheel drive car with an automatic transmission is what you want.

You'll be asked to specify a price range for your car. In this case, you might type in $8,000 to $12,000. You'll also be asked to choose an EPA city fuel economy rating—ranging from 10 miles per gallon to 50 miles per gallon. You could specify, for instance, that you wanted a rating of greater than 20 miles per gallon.

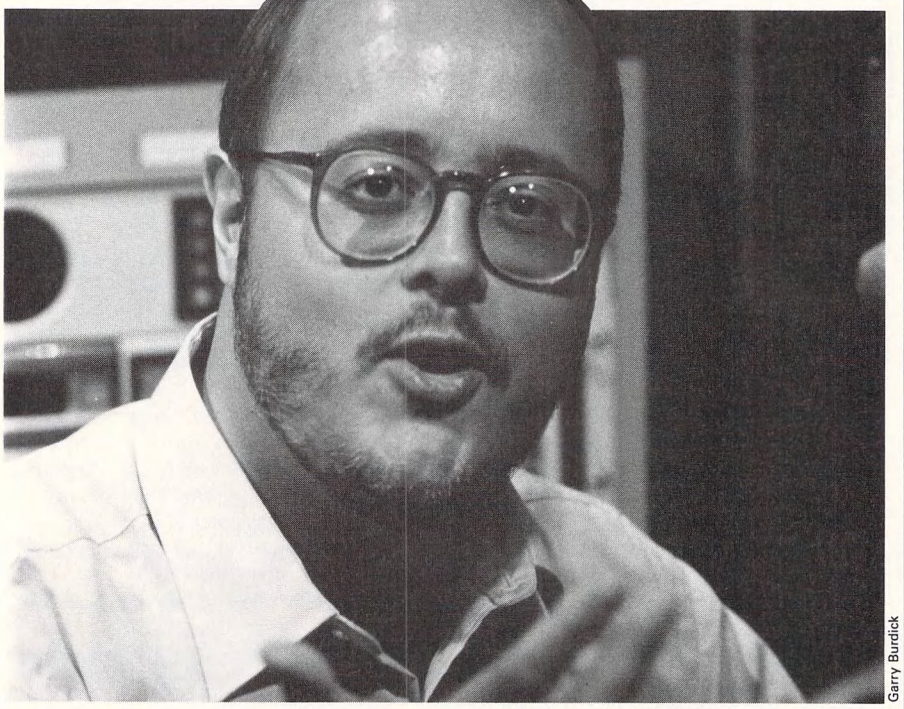
Once you've answered the questions, the auto selector will list the choices you've picked. There is a 40-cent surcharge to list the models that meet your criteria.

The New Car Showroom also allows you to do a side-by-side comparison of two models to determine which one best meets your criteria.

When you've made your choice, select Option 5, "Figure Your Monthly Payments," to figure out the monthly payments. You'll need to specify how much you plan to borrow, the interest and the term of the loan. You can run comparisons of several payment options to find the one that's best for you.

You can purchase or lease a vehicle from Autovision (GO AV) and Dutchess CompuLease (GO DU), available on the Automotive menu, or take the information with you to a regular dealership. Either way, you'll be better informed and in a better bargaining position.

— JM



Garry Burdick

Self-confessed radio fanatic: *Cameron, Journalism Forum administrator*

On the Air and Online: JForum's Cameron

by Camille Ohlson

What do Donald Trump, 1960s FM rock radio stations, CompuServe, radio news and Toronto have in common? Not much, unless you look at the resume of journalist Jim Cameron, administrator of the Journalism Forum (GO JFORUM).

A self-confessed radio fanatic, Cameron can be heard several days a week anchoring the news broadcasts over the 1,200 affiliates of the United Stations Radio Network. His interest in radio goes back to his youth in Toronto, where he spent long hours listening to the Canadian Broadcasting Corp.

"Canadian radio is a much different medium than that in the United States. It expects more of its listeners and respects their intelligence more than American broadcasting does," he says.

The height of the 1960s' "underground rock" gave Cameron his entrance into the world of commercial broadcasting. He attended Lehigh University and spent "almost every spare minute" working at the campus radio station, WLVR. "I helped turn the station from a wishy-washy, faculty-oriented classical station into a solid, album rock station by the late 1960s," says Cameron.

Cameron wanted to work in radio, but not with the rigid formats and prescripted jokes. "I'd always been fascinated with the news, so the transition seemed obvious," he says.

The transition from music to news actually started in college when Cameron produced a news documentary, entitled "Old Friends," on the problems of growing old. Based on the Simon and Garfunkel song of the same name, the documentary won Cameron the first of his three Major Armstrong awards. Named after the inventor of FM, the awards are presented by Columbia University for outstanding radio programs.

Prior to settling into the anchor seat for the United Stations, Cameron worked for East Coast radio stations, including a two-and-a-half-year stint at the helm of NBC's "Source" radio network. During his tenure with the "Source" network, Cameron bought a Radio Shack Model 100 portable computer for word processing—standard equipment for thousands of journalists. It wasn't long before Cameron bought a cable for the built-in modem and got a CompuServe starter kit.

"I'd heard of the service and knew what it was ... but when I finally logged on, well, a new world opened before me on that tiny screen," says Cameron.

Cameron spent about six months navigating the corridors of CompuServe. Along the way he bumped into other journalists and decided there should be a forum for them. The Journalism Forum, also known as JForum, went online Sept. 1, 1985, with just a few dozen members; today several thousand people have joined.

Cameron's concept for JForum was to have a place where journalists could compare notes, share contacts and find jobs.

The forum provides an opportunity for journalists to share ideas with those who specialize in other aspects of the profession. Before going online, "radio reporters, for example, would hardly ever get a chance to share ideas with photo journalists," he says.

Most of the activity in the forum takes place on the message boards. Threads of particular interest are filed away in the data libraries for reference.

"Our conferences haven't been our strength so far, because of the varied schedules of journalists. It's tough to get us online simultaneously. That's the beauty of the message board's time shifting capabilities ... it's there when you want to use it."

Despite the time taken to anchor the news and manage JForum, Cameron still has time to run a successful business from his Brooklyn, N.Y., home. The two major activities of Cameron Communications Inc. are narrating books for cassette and training executives to face the media. Cameron is currently narrating Donald Trump's *The Art of The Deal* for Random House Cassette Books. *Iacocca*, David Stockman's biography, and Walter Wriston's *Risk is a Four Letter Word* are other books Cameron has narrated.

Cameron got the idea for media training while doing radio talk shows, when he realized that few people give good interviews. "In the past five years I've trained hundreds of authors, politicians, doctors and CEOs for everything from call-in shows to '60 Minutes,'" he says.

Cameron believes that most of his clients fear the press because they don't understand it. Part of his job is to explain how a journalist works—what he needs for a story and how he puts that story together.

Says Cameron, "Too many CEOs think we're all like Mike Wallace, while we journalists think they're all like Donald Trump."

Camille Ohlson is a free-lance writer based in San Diego. Her CompuServe User ID number is 70007,3340.

D. Harvey Oh

Advising jolly jockeys: *Trachman*

Trachman Spins Jokes for Jockeys

If you think the quick-witted fellow on the radio writes all of his own jokes, think again. Most disc jockeys get help in being funny, and many of them get it from Jay Trachman, author and publisher of *One-to-One*.

The weekly newsletter, which has a print circulation of more than 2,000, is available online in the Broadcast Professionals Forum in Data Library 5.

Trachman provides radio programmers and DJs with advice and tips for improving their on-air sound as well as things to talk about, including calendars of history and lots of jokes.

Some of his jokes are related to current events while others comment on society ("Hear about the yuppie kids who went to the beach and spent the day building condos in the sand?"). "Topical humor, by its nature, goes out of date quickly. What people are talking about today is forgotten when tomorrow's news breaks," Trachman says. "Online distribution gives our subscribers an 'edge' for those jokes that make the rounds quickly." Overseas subscribers have an even greater advantage, with that crucial edge measured in weeks, not days.

DJs aren't the only ones who can benefit from *One-to-One*. Public speakers, sales people and anyone who works with the public (or anyone who just likes good jokes) will enjoy the newsletter.

Trachman does all of the writing himself, sitting in front of his computer six to eight hours a day, four days a week. He says he gets his ideas by just reading the newspapers and "thinking funny." Although he writes the talent tips himself, he says of the jokes, "I have no qualms about 'adapting' lines or concepts from the columnists I read or even from the comics. Remember the adage: 'If you steal from one source, that's plagiarism. If you steal from 12, that's research!'"

One-to-One is uploaded on Saturday evenings, two to nine days prior to the publication of the print edition. A shareware fee of $3.50 per issue is requested, especially if the material is used for commercial purposes. To reach the forum, type GO BPFORUM at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service.

Each issue of *Online Today* is filled with information which CompuServe subscribers benefit from having close at hand for reference.

Use these handsome binders and slip covers to store and protect your back and future editions.

Both styles of case are handcrafted in leather-like fabric, similar to the storage units used by libraries to shelve and preserve their periodicals. And the spines of all cases are embossed with the *Online Today* logo for easy identification on any bookshelf.

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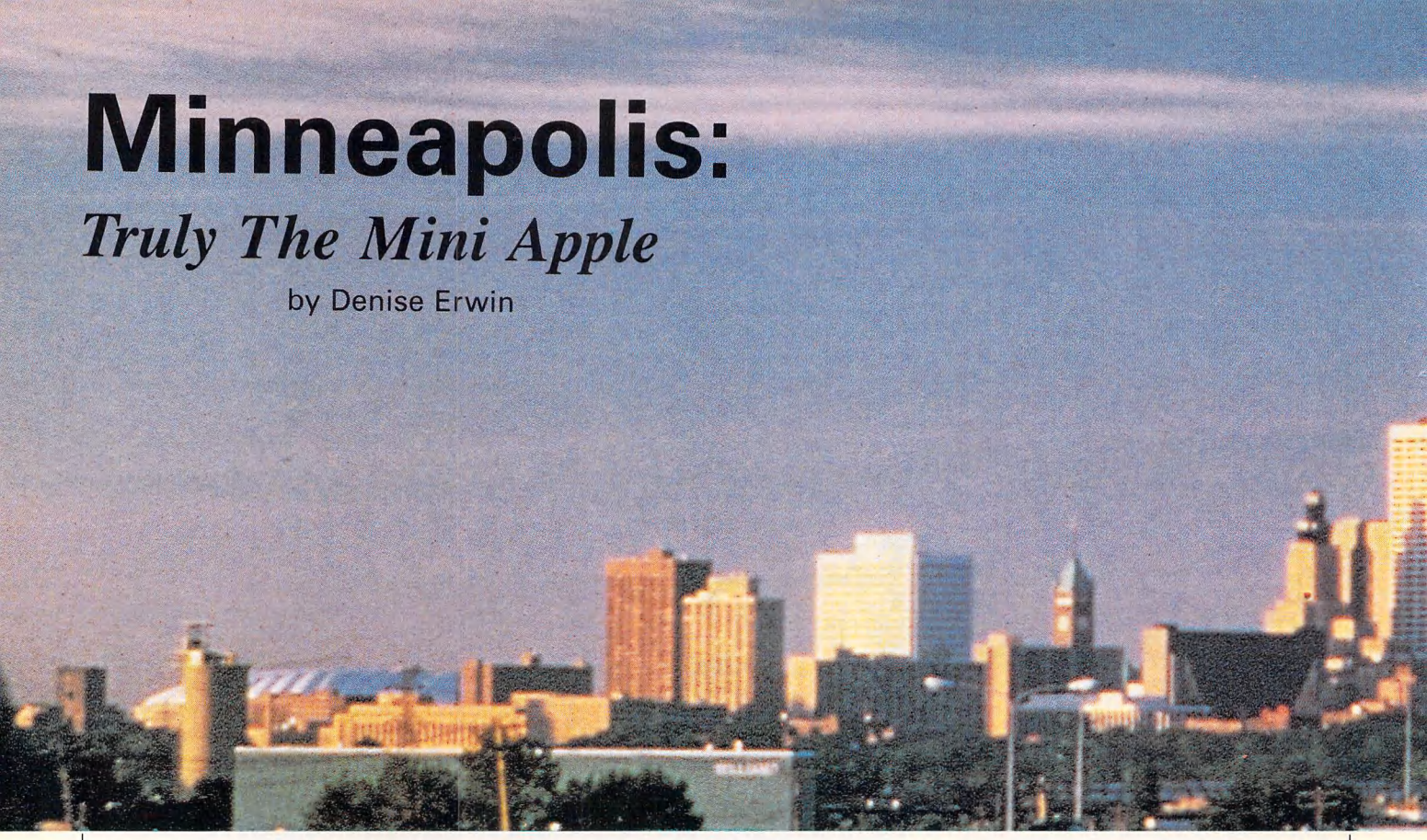
Minneapolis:

Truly The Mini Apple

by Denise Erwin



Minneapolitans take the nickname of their city, the Mini Apple, seriously.

Minneapolis has more theaters, museums and art centers per capita than any other city. However, this large metropolis, with a population of 1.2 million, names many of its squares, streets and parks in New York City style. For example, hundreds of Minneapolitans gather on a typical summer day to brown-bag and people-watch at a park like Rockefeller Plaza.

Minneapolis' riverfront district is well-known. The city was founded at the riverfront in 1683 by Father Louis Hennepin, a 26-year-old Franciscan priest who landed on the bank while he was looking for the source of the river. The city was originally named Minnehaha, meaning waterfall, because of a series of 75-foot-high waterfalls. By 1883, the waterfalls were used to make hydropower. Minneapolis was the first city in the West to have electricity (even before the White House). The waterfalls were originally called the Falls of St. Anthony—for the city across from Minnehaha, now called St. Paul.

In 1964, when America's flight to the suburbs began in Minneapolis, city officials decided to do something to make the downtown area more appealing than the suburbs. Minneapolis was the nation's first city to bring people back downtown.

One of the first things Minneapolis did to improve its downtown was to construct the Nicollet Mall, a 13-block, open-ended pedestrian shopping center—the longest in the world. The Mall continues to construct additions including the newly opened Conservatory. Designed like a European shopping arcade, the Conservatory houses specialty, gift, jewelry, home furnishings and apparel stores, and two restaurants, Goodfellow's and Tejas.

Minneapolis' next step was the construction of a skyway system—an enclosed, climate-controlled, elevated sidewalk. Minneapolis has 35 skyways covering almost eight miles. The construction cost is shared by the buildings the skyways connect. When the system is finished, about 80 skyways will connect every hotel in the downtown area to the river and to the Hubert Humphrey Metrodome stadium.

Courtesy Greater Minneapolis Convention/Visitors Assoc.

Friendly skyways: *Minneapolis*

The dome, covered by interwoven Teflon, canvas and fiberglass cloth held up by four gigantic fans, is the home of the Minnesota Vikings and the 1987 World Series Champion Minnesota Twins. Though 80 percent of the Minneapolis residents did not want the

dome stadium downtown, its construction was part of the city's continuing effort to regenerate downtown.

The downtown area also boasts notable buildings, including the Investors Diversified Services Building, the largest non-banking institution in the United States. This building features the Crystal Court, where Mary Tyler Moore was filmed riding the escalator. The 50th floor features Cleo's, a nightspot for music and hors d'oeuvres, and the Orion Room restaurant, overlooking the airport and offering a beautiful view of the city. At 776 feet with 57 stories, the IDS Building, opened in 1971, is the tallest building between Chicago and San Francisco.

"Making it after all": *Crystal Court*

Other striking buildings include the Northwestern Life Insurance Co. designed by Minow Rou Nanasacki, who also designed the World Trade Center in New York and the Seattle Space Needle. Sixty percent of the First Federal Bank is underground. The Northwest Operations building won an award in 1987 for energy efficiency because its computers generate their own electricity and operate the heating and cooling systems. Minneapolis' Orchestra Hall is one of the finest orchestra theaters in the country with its cooling system vented outside the building (to eliminate the system's noise) so that it looks like an oceanliner. The Minneapolis Orchestra and St. Paul Chamber Orchestra make regular appearances here.

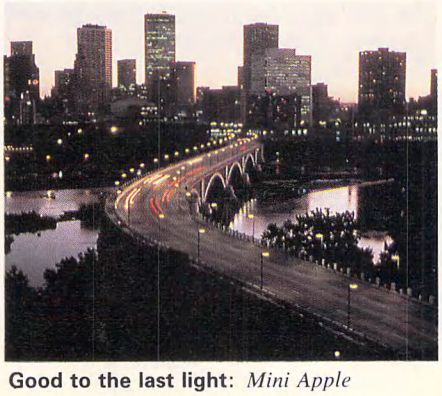
The city is now building the Northwest Tower to replace the old Donaldsons building, which burned on Thanksgiving night 1983. The Tower will house a bank, condominiums, offices, shops and restaurants. Also under construction is the restoration of the 1870-vintage Milwaukee Depot in the milling district. At one time five railways went in and out of Minneapolis. The new area will feature outside cafes, offices and a carousel.

Minutes from the IDS building via the skyways is an extensive shopping district featuring Dayton's, one of the finest and most profitable department stores in the world, and Donaldsons, which is at the gateway to the one-block, multimillion dollar City Center built for enclosed shopping at more than 150 shops.

Also along the way is the Radisson Hotel, named after the first explorer of Minnesota, and the Marriott Hotel, which houses Gustino's, an Italian restaurant with singing waiters and waitresses. For fine dining and warm hospitality, try the Omni Northstar Hotel. The Omni, conveniently located within a 10-minute walk of most of the downtown area, offers the Rosewood Room and Bar. If you would like to take a walking tour of Minneapolis, you can rent a travel cassette for $5 at Hello Minnesota, a souvenir shop.

Denise Erwin is assistant editor of Online Today. *Her CompuServe User ID number is 70003,3246.*

Editor's note: Travel arrangements for this article were courtesy of Bank One Travel, Northwest Airlines and Omni Northstar Hotel.



Good to the last light: *Mini Apple*

Chip Barthelmas

Frequent Flier Clubs Take off with Travelers

by Sandra Gurvis

Frequent flier clubs are an easy, fun way to get the most out of your travel dollar. Membership is usually free of charge; participants simply sign up with an airline and let points accumulate as they fly. Awards range from discounts on tickets to free trips to reduced rates on hotels and car rentals. It's no wonder frequent flier clubs have "taken off" in recent years.

Two clubs are offered within CompuServe's air information and reservations services (GO FLIGHTS). CompuServe subscribers can take advantage of nearly every club as long as they make sure that the club or airline is informed of ticket purchases. Options include the following:

Eaasy Sabre (GO EAASY)

This online reservation system provides access to the American Airlines Sabre computer. CompuServe subscribers can obtain schedule and fare information for more than 625 airlines and data on 16,000 hotels and 31 car rental companies worldwide. Anyone can view this information, but to make reservations you must enroll online, which automatically makes you a member of the American Airlines AAdvantage travel awards program. There is no cost; you simply receive an AAdvantage program number and can create your own password for using the Eaasy Sabre system.

What's in it for members? Plenty. Upon signing up, you are immediately credited with a 3,000-mile enrollment bonus to start your account. You get an additional 2,000 miles if you take an American Airlines flight within two months. (This is over credit you'd normally receive.)

Eaasy Sabre makes keeping track of your mileage as simple as logging onto CompuServe. The service provides a table that allows members to calculate mileage points in advance, and they can automatically access their account status at any time.

All mileage credit is automatically added to accounts; active members regularly receive personalized summaries of their total accumulated mileage. Bonuses aren't reaped in just American Airlines tickets; users are entitled to discounts on hotels, car rentals and specific overseas airways. The AAdvantage program offers additional perks to those willing to go to American Airlines ticket counters and offices or those who call the toll-free number (1-800-433-7300) for more information about the AAdvantage program and Senior Saaver Clubs. Persons applying for and receiving Citibank AAdvantage MasterCard or VISA cards can earn one mile credit for each dollar charged, excluding cash advances.

Travelshopper (GO PARS)

CompuServe users can browse for flight, fee and related information through an extensive communications link with PARS Travel Information Systems. Subscribers enrolling or wishing to book reservations on Travelshopper become instant members of the Frequent Flight Bonus program and receive a bonus of 3,000 miles. In addition, if you book TWA flights using Travelshopper during the first 90 days after enrolling, you will receive an additional 500 bonus miles for each of those flights. Simply complete the online application, which requires (and immediately purges from memory) a major credit card. Accumulated mileage rewards for FFBs include discounted or free tickets, car rentals and hotel accommodations.

Certain restrictions and time limitations apply here: Check the service to find out conditions and length of validation of awards. Specifics on claiming discounts can be obtained by calling the airline, your preferred PARS travel agent, or the Travelshopper Help Desk at 1-800-892-1011.

Official Airline Guide Electronic Edition (GO OAG)

This surcharged service includes all licensed airlines' flight schedules, fares and the ability to make online reservations. Although it does not offer a frequent flier club per se, persons already enrolled in other clubs can inform the airline of ticket purchases that can be applied toward mileage awards.

With the increase in air travel and reduced and special fares, it makes sense to join a frequent flier club. For more information, type GO FLIGHTS.

Guide Simplifies Hotel Search Process

Sometimes locating the right hotel isn't easy. Say you're going out of town and need accommodations close to the city center to get an early start on the next day's business. Or maybe you're interested in working out every day of your trip and want a hotel equipped with a fitness center. Where can you get the information to do all of this?

CompuServe's revised and expanded ABC Worldwide Hotel Guide (GO ABC) can provide an easy-to-use method to get general information (addresses, toll-free numbers, rates) and those important details (distance from nearest airport, dining facilities, date of original construction) that can make the difference between delight and disaster. The list of properties, which will soon number 40,000, is updated continually to reflect changes in room rates, new facilities and services.

Taking advantage of this user-friendly service is easy. If you are looking for information on hotels in the United States, select Option 1. Next type the two-letter state postal code. If your destination is in another country or island, select Option 2. At the prompt, type the name of the country.

If you are unsure of the spelling, type as many letters as possible to distinguish the country from others. The system performs a "begins with" search; therefore, if more than one country begins with the letters given, all the hotels for each country will be found. The Hotel Guide provides an index of countries to help you locate the exact information you are seeking. Also included in the index is a guide to the two-letter state codes for searching

hotels in the United States. The index is divided into six sections (Bahamas, Caribbean, Hawaii, Pacific, United States and others), each offering its own instructions.

Next you will be prompted for the name of your destination city. Exact spelling is important because the Guide does not recognize variations in names. A message announces the number of hotels found and a menu allows you to narrow your search.

Option 1 will provide additional menus listing the names and locations of hotels found. You can then select the hotel you wish to review in detail; a complete description will appear on the screen.

Selecting Option 2 allows you to narrow your search by price range. All prices reflect current information and are subject to seasonal fluctuation, currency adjustments and other changes without notice.

Options 3 and 4 allow you to type the name of the exact hotel or chain. Option 5 allows you to narrow your search by using a menu of 26 features and amenities, ranging from hotel location, to whether it has a fitness center.

If, for example, you wish to find hotels at your destination with both medium room rates and conference facilities, you would first select the option to narrow your search by price range. The number of hotels for the price range selected will be displayed. Then select the option to narrow by location/amenities and the Guide will search the list of hotels in the medium price range to find the hotels with conference facilities.

The Guide also remembers your previous search. You can restore it by selecting Option 6, Restore Previous Selection Set, from the first menu. This is useful if you are narrowing down hotels by several criteria.

The Guide also provides special Island menus for the Bahamas, Caribbean, Hawaii and the Pacific.

If you are interested in a hotel at Fiji, select Option 6, Pacific, and then select Option 5, Fiji. Another menu listing 13 locations allows you to narrow your search further. For example, if you select here Option 1, Korolevu, the Guide finds and lists four hotels. By again selecting Option 1, Hyatt Regency Fiji Hotel in Korolevu, Pacific, you will see the hotel's address, telephone, accommodations, pricing and facilities.

When you plan your next vacation online, type GO ABC and make locating the right hotel just that simple.

That's the Ticket!

Online airline reservation services, such as Eaasy Sabre, the Official Airline Guide Electronic Edition and Travelshopper, can be your ticket to smoother travel planning.

To help subscribers get the most out of these services, CompuServe answers some commonly-asked questions. For additional information about each of the services, type GO FLIGHTS at any prompt on the CompuServe Information Service.

Q: What does it mean to "enroll" and how long will it be before I can make an airline reservation?

A: Some airline systems require that you enroll before you can make a reservation online—fill out an application to validate yourself for the reservation process. It doesn't cost anything beyond connect time. You'll be asked for your name and credit card number (only for the purpose of getting approval; the credit card number is not stored on the system). You'll immediately find out if you've been accepted and you'll receive a frequent flier number and password. You can book reservations that same day.

Q: What's the difference between browsing and booking?

A: When you're researching schedules and fares, you're "browsing." You have to enter a command to make a reservation, to tell the system that you want to book the flight. You'll know at that point if you've booked, since the system will go through the booking process online, asking you a series of questions.

Q: Can I book a flight from anywhere on the airline system?

A: To reserve a flight, you need to be at a "schedule" screen (a screen listing flight schedules as opposed to fares). You can't book a fare, because one fare applies to hundreds of flights. That's why you need to book specific flights.

Q: What kinds of questions will I be asked when I browse or book a flight?

A: At a schedule screen, you'll be prompted for the departure city, the destination city, the departure date and the departure time. That's the basic information you should jot down before you access the online airline reservation service.

At this point, you haven't "booked" the flight. If you wish to book it (and you've already completed any required enrollment process), typically you'll need to enter a command (such as "B") and the line number of the flight. Once you've indicated which flight you want, the system will ask you a series of questions, such as the number of seats needed, the seat preference and the name under which the tickets should be reserved. You'll also be asked which ticketing option you prefer.

When your reservation is processed, you'll see a confirmation number on the screen. That means your reservation is in the system and can be identified. It's a good idea to jot down that confirmation number in case you need to refer to it later.

Q: What are the ticketing options?

A: Many subscribers don't realize that they have a choice about where their airline tickets come from. For example, the ticket can be sent to your local travel agent, you can pick it up at the airline ticket office or the city ticket office, or you can get it at the airport. Some services also have ticket-by-mail options.

Q: How do I know for sure that my reservation was received?

A: When you see your confirmation number, you know that the flight has been booked. Also, all reservations are verified. If anything would happen, such as a flight being cancelled or being made unavailable, an airline reservation service representative would contact you within 24 hours.

Q: If I need to cancel my reservation, will it cost me anything?

A: You can change or cancel your reservation at any time. An online airline reservation is subject to the same cancellation penalties—if there are any—as any flight booked through a travel agent or other reservation capability.

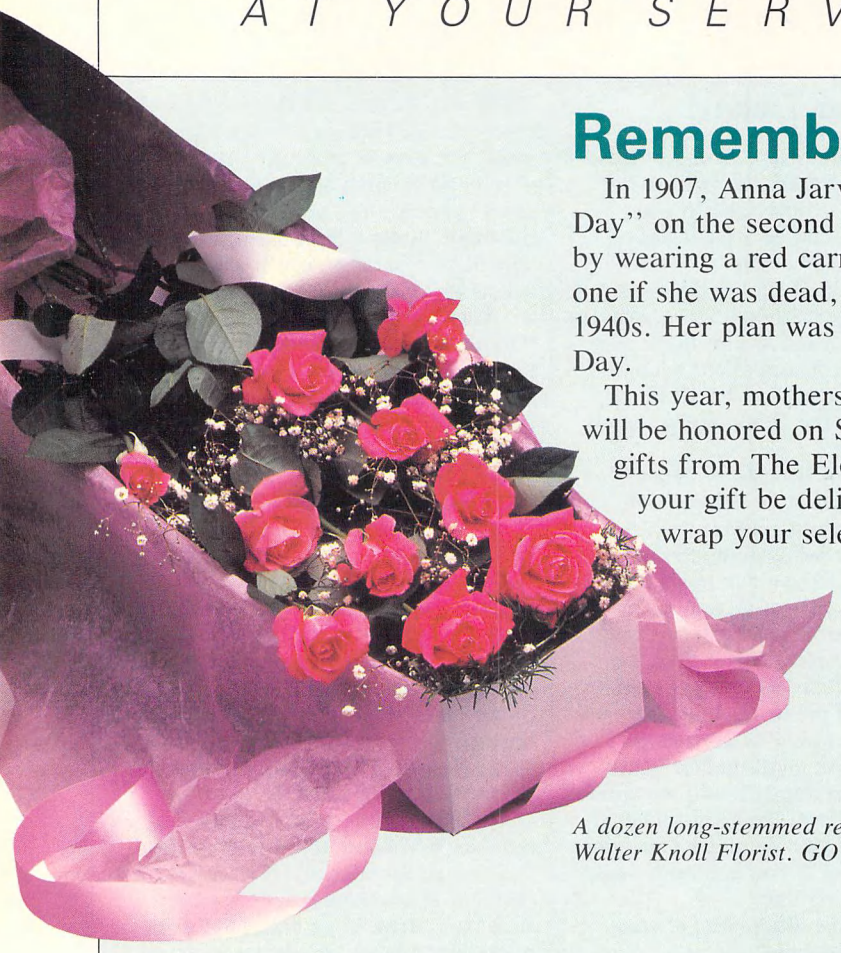
Q: How can I get assistance in using the airline reservation systems?

A: There are several sources of help available. Each service has a toll-free 800 number and an online feedback capability. The services also provide online Help areas with instructions in such things as using commands and decoding system abbreviations. In fact, that's the first area new subscribers should check. Finally, CompuServe provides online instructions that you can read before accessing the airline reservation services; and you can use familiar system commands. The May, June and July editions of *Online Today* will feature one airline reservation system each month to acquaint you with each of their special features and how to use them.

Remembering Mom

In 1907, Anna Jarvis proposed the idea of celebrating "Mother's Day" on the second Sunday of May. She suggested it be celebrated by wearing a red carnation if one's mother was alive and a white one if she was dead, a custom that remained popular into the 1940s. Her plan was adopted on May 10, 1908, the first Mother's Day.

This year, mothers, grandmothers and mothers-to-be worldwide will be honored on Sunday, May 8. Remember them with special gifts from The Electronic Mall®. Shop early and request that your gift be delivered by Mother's Day. Many merchants will wrap your selection and enclose a card.



A dozen long-stemmed red roses. From Walter Knoll Florist. GO WK

*A flowered bath wrap. From Inside * Outside Lingerie. GO IO*

The Bath Collection—body brush, nail brush, loofah pad, seawool sponge and an inflatable bath pillow. From B&K Beauty Supplies. GO BK

Here is a sampling of gift ideas for mom.

Traditional offerings—flowers, chocolates and perfumes:

An FTD Mother's Day bouquet—a festive spring arrangement boasting Mother's Day greetings. From Walter Knoll Florist. GO WK

A bonsai azalea plant. From Pepperidge Farm. GO PF

A deluxe box of Joseph Schmidt miniature chocolate truffles. From Simon David. GO SIM

A 1/4-ounce bottle of her favorite perfume from Giorgio to Claiborne to Oscar de la Renta and more. Consult the online advisor for suggestions. From Harris ScentSations. GO HR

An Art Nouveau perfume bottle—a graceful replica of an original created by Lucien Gaillard in France between 1907 and 1914. From The Metropolitan Museum of Art. GO MMA

For the cook and the gourmet:

A subscription to *Food & Wine* magazine. From American Express. GO AMX

Cookbooks galore—everything from *Texas on the Halfshell* to *The Heritage of Southern Cooking*. Especially recommended are *Fresh Ideas for Vegetables*, *Pasta Salad* and *Good Times Cookbook*. From Simon David. GO SIM

The best home juice extractor. From Hammacher Schlemmer. GO HS

The Breakfast Club Plus—includes San Francisco-style honey, sourdough bread mix, a jelly sampler from San Francisco's wine country and a generous supply of Colombia Supremo coffee. From Coffee Emporium. GO COF

For bed and bath:

Soft terry cloth robe available in white, pink or blue. From Brooks Brothers. GO BR

Spring Lily Fragrant Body Cream—moisturizing cream rich in vitamin E and aloe vera. From General Nutrition Center. GO GN

A breakfast basket brimming with imported jams and marmalades, honeys, biscuits, teas, cocoas and more. From Lincoln Manor Baskets. GO LM

A baby-soft nightshirt. From Inside*Outside Lingerie. GO IO

Books for bedside reading—Marilyn French's *Her Mother's Daughter*, Gail Godwin's *A Southern Family* or Danielle Steele's *Kaleidoscope*. From Waldenbooks. GO WB

And bookends, too! Select designs in burgundy, walnut or polished chrome. From J.E. Smith Brassware. GO JE

The Champagne Hamper—a deluxe wicker hamper, filled with coconut patties, honey, nuts, Florida's finest citrus and more. From Florida Fruit Shippers. GO FFS

A 10 kt. gold Cross pen and pencil set that comes with a lifetime guarantee. From The Stationery Center. GO SC

A variety of suggestions:

The Mother's Day Cookie Tin—filled with Pepperidge Farm's finest sampling. From Pepperidge Farm. GO PF

An ivory blouse made of rich silk crepe de Chine. From Brooks Brothers. GO BR

A French niello heart box—a heart is enameled by hand, gold-plated and set in place on the lid of the brass box. From The Metropolitan Museum of Art. GO MMA

A bird's nest of potpourri. From Pepperidge Farm. GO PF

An engraved gold bangle bracelet. From The Gold Connection. GO GD

An estate inkwell set. From J.E. Smith. GO JE

A heart-shaped box filled with potpourri. From Lincoln Manor Baskets. GO LM

Tropical Flight Balloon Pack—an inflated helium balloon anchored by tropical candies and Valencia oranges. The heavy-duty balloon retains its buoyancy for weeks and says "Thinking of You." From Florida Fruit Shippers. GO FFS

A miniature Japanese teapot and a sampler of loose teas. From Coffee Emporium. GO COF

For these and more Mother's Day suggestions, GO MALL.

A 24-inch fossilized ivory necklace. From Ivory Cache. GO IV

A royal blue gossamer silk chiffon shawl. From The Metropolitan Museum of Art. GO MMA

Ask Customer Service

Q: What is PC3?

A: The Professional Connection 3.1, or PC3, is a sophisticated, versatile communications software package developed by CompuServe for use with the IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and fully compatible computers.

Q: What are some benefits and features of this new software product?

A: The particular benefits that you can derive from using PC3 depend on your own situation and needs. Some general benefits would be the software's broad compatibility, ease of use, versatility, flexibility, expandability, and extensive support from CompuServe and Customer Service.

PC3's most important features include a customizable main menu, automated access to multiple computer systems, online key commands, extended video display support, versatile script facility, informative status line, immediate access to DOS, error-free file transfer with CompuServe's B protocol or XMODEM, and Run-Length Encoded format, North American Presentation Level Protocol Syntax, and CompuServe's Graphics Interchange Format, full graphic capabilities.

Q: Where do I find PC3?

A: You can find CompuServe's Professional Connection in your local computer store. To ensure that you are receiving the most current version of PC3, type GO ORDER online. After reviewing a complete description of the product and equipment requirements, you can conveniently order PC3 online. This software is delivered on two 5.25-inch diskettes packaged in a binder with a complete instructional guide. Also available are 3.5-inch diskettes.

Q: Does CompuServe offer a software program compatible with my Macintosh computer?

A: Yes. CompuServe Navigator is a Macintosh application program that can be used to communicate with the CompuServe Information Service.

Q: What are the benefits and features of CompuServe Navigator?

A: Navigator allows subscribers to automate their access to forums and EasyPlex. You can use Navigator to read messages, compose replies and download library files. One major advantage of Navigator over a traditional terminal emulation application is that you do not have to be concerned with CompuServe menus or commands. You need only specify the type of information you wish to see using the familiar Macintosh user interface. Navigator translates these specifications into the specific CompuServe commands needed. Because you read and compose messages offline, using Navigator can save valuable connect time.

Q: How can I learn more about Navigator?

A: To get more information, type GO VIDTEX and select CompuServe Navigator. To order the CompuServe Navigator, type GO ORDER and access the CompuServe product ordering area.

Q: What is Kermit protocol?

A: Due to an overwhelming subscriber demand for Kermit protocol for file-transfer capability, CompuServe added the Kermit Download/Upload protocol. Some popular software programs such as Procomm and QMODEM enable subscribers to upload and download using Kermit. For more information, check in the forum for your type of computer or type GO IBMCOMM and access the IBM Communications Forum.

—Sally Wardlow

Gift of Time

CompuServe References Preferred

I became a CompuServe subscriber shortly after I purchased a Tandy Model 100 portable computer. The software available for this model is quite limited. CompuServe, however, has solved this problem for me in the Model 100 Forum (GO M100SIG).

Almost all of my best software has come from this forum's data libraries. For example, after I bought a 1200-baud modem, I found a utility program that allows my computer to communicate at the modem's full capacity. Without this program, the Model 100's screen-scrolling routine limits its communication speed to 600 baud.

Countless other software and information for the Model 100 are available in the Model 100 Forum. My computer would be lifeless without this forum.

Scott A. Rogers
Hendersonville, Tenn.

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Read CompuServe News

Online Today Daily Edition covers the online community. Whether it's a forum conference announcement, a special promotion or a new product introduction, you can read all about it in the *Daily Edition*. To access news about the CompuServe community, type GO OLT-50 at any CompuServe Information Service prompt.

***COMPUSERVE THIS WEEK**	**OLT-50**
About This Section	**OLT-60**
Community News	**OLT-80**
Conference Schedules	**OLT-120**
Letters to Editor	**OLT-30**
Online Today Guide	**OLT-351**
Previous Weeks' What's News	**OLT-270**
Uploads Updates	**OLT-3700**
What's New	**OLT-70**

Q&A Database Assists Subscribers

Got a question about the CompuServe Information Service? Chances are that CompuServe has the answer in the Questions and Answers database (GO QUESTIONS).

The Questions and Answers database contains answers to some of CompuServe subscribers' most common questions, ranging from billing to service-specific topics.

Information is broken down by category and displayed in question-and-answer format. The categories are billing, log-on/system/access, EasyPlex/MCI Mail, forums, Personal File Area, first service/personal menu, Executive Option, online ordering, CB Simulator, market quotes, National Bulletin Board, VIDTEX, uploading/downloading files, graphics and games.

Choose the category you're interested in from the main Questions and Answers menu, then select the appropriate question from the next menu.

You'll receive a complete, detailed response to your question.

If you have a question that is not answered in the Questions and Answers database, you may pose your question directly to a CompuServe customer service representative through the Feedback to Customer Service area. Type GO FEEDBACK at any prompt.

Greg Miller

Tips for subscribers: *Pampuch*

Tip of the Month

Amy Pampuch, representative II, has been with CompuServe's Customer Service staff for two years. A senior majoring in economics at Ohio State University, she works the evening shift and attends classes during the day.

If Amy could gather all of CompuServe's subscribers together at once, she'd give them this tip: "The symbol ‹CR› stands for Carriage Return. When in doubt about anything, type HELP and you'll probably get assistance. Finally, when all else fails, try reading the manual."

Changing Your Password

The CompuServe Information Service urges its customers to change their passwords at least once a month.

The password should be a minimum of eight characters composed of two unrelated words separated by a symbol, for example: HOUSE*MAGNET.

To find out how to change your password, type GO PASSWORD.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

for
AT&T'S LIVE
UNIX UNIFICATION CONFERENCE
Wednesday, APRIL 20th
8:00 PM EST
with
Mr. Dale Hazel
UNIX System Expert

Topics discussed will include:

- XENIX Compatability (AT&T/Microsoft)
- BSD/Sun OS Features (AT&T/Sun Microsystems)
- UNIX System Release 4.0

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The right choice.

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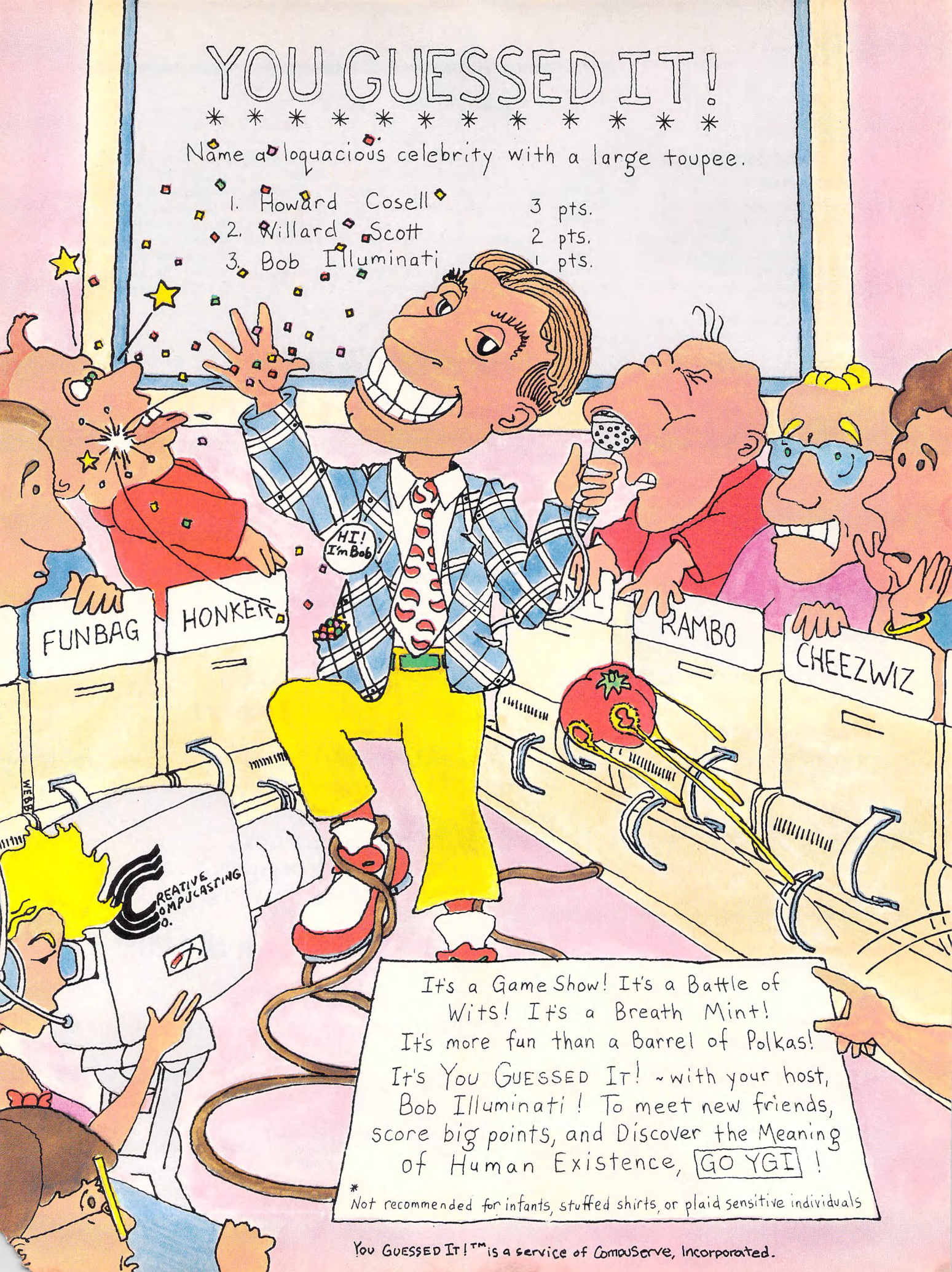
YOU GUESSED IT!
* * * * * * * * * * * * *
Name a loquacious celebrity with a large toupee.
1. Howard Cosell 3 pts.
2. Willard Scott 2 pts.
3. Bob Illuminati 1 pts.
HI! I'm Bob
FUNBAG
HONKER
RAMBO
CHEEZWIZ
CREATIVE COMPUCASTING CO.
It's a Game Show! It's a Battle of Wits! It's a Breath Mint! It's more fun than a Barrel of Polkas! It's You Guessed It! ~with your host, Bob Illuminati! To meet new friends, score big points, and Discover the Meaning of Human Existence, GO YGI !
* Not recommended for infants, stuffed shirts, or plaid sensitive individuals
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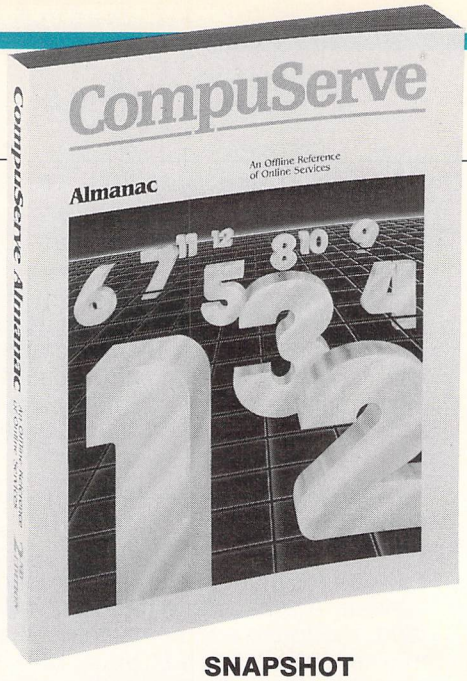

Product Almanac Updates Keep Users Up-to-Date

Since the CompuServe Information Service is constantly changing, the following pages are provided as a supplement to the *CompuServe Almanac*. *Almanac* updates will appear periodically in *Online Today*.

The *CompuServe Almanac* is a handy reference source describing the forums and databases on the CompuServe Information Service. By checking the *Almanac*, you can navigate the service more quickly. To order a copy of the *CompuServe Almanac*, type GO ORDER.

1.1.2
Current Market Snapshot **SNAPSHOT**

Current Market SNAPSHOT provides a picture of the current stock market trend by depicting key indicators in a concise, one-page report of statistics. SNAPSHOT highlights current trading trends by presenting the highest, lowest and latest values for the Dow Jones 30, Standard and Poor's 500 and NASDAQ Composite. The strength of this trend is defined by summarizing New York Stock Exchange activity, including percent change and number of shares traded in the current session. The trend's breadth is described by reporting advancing and declining issues and separating up from down volume. SNAPSHOT also presents the value of the US dollar in gold, yen, deutsche marks and pounds.

4.5.9
Scuba Forum **DIVING**

The Scuba Forum is run by experienced scuba divers and diving professionals and has several areas ranging from information on how to seek scuba instruction to how to pursue a career in diving. The forum is for experienced divers as well as people with just a casual interest who want to find out more about diving. Browse through the forum for dive sites; ask questions of fellow divers; attend scheduled conferences with diving physicians, professional divers, instructors, underwater-photography specialists and others. Learn how to care for equipment and take better underwater photographs. Make new diving friends on the Scuba Forum.

5.2.3
EAASY SABRE **EAASY**

Eaasy Sabre, the travel reservation system from American Airlines, provides flight schedules for almost all commercial airlines, information on more than 25 million airfares and access to more than 13,000 hotels and 25 car rental agencies. You can use Eaasy Sabre to find the fastest route to a destination, to check weather reports and AAdvantage travel awards and to take advantage of the lowest airfares with the Bargain Finder^{SM} feature. After confirming airline, hotel and car reservations online, you can arrange to receive your tickets through a travel agency, corporate travel office, an airport or by US mail. There is no surcharge for this service.

5.6.1
Hawaiian Concierge **HAWAII**

Aloha! With the Hawaiian Concierge you can make all the arrangements for your entire Hawaiian vacation or convention. Endless beaches, rain forests and volcanoes, bustling marketplaces and nightlife can all be yours. You can even order tropical flowers for 48-hour delivery in the United States and nearly everywhere else in the world. If you are not sure exactly what Hawaii offers, you can browse through descriptions of each of the islands, excursions, sumptuous feasts and secluded strolls. Hawaiian Concierge takes you there.

6.1.1.4.16
Virtusonics Corp. **VC**

Use your computer to create songs and animated stories! With VIRTUOSO® Desk Top Performance Studio™, you can make music and graphics in interactive and live modes. Animate the graphics by music and add text to create a story, a song or a concert. Your creations can be telecommunicated to others through the telecom editor. The Desk Top Performance studio is currently available for Atari 8-bit computers and will soon be available for Commodore 64 and 128 computers.

6.1.1.6.4
Ivory Cache **IV**

Looking for that special gift for yourself or someone else? The Ivory Cache in historic Juneau, Alaska, offers hand-carved jewelry in silver, gold and ivory, as well as handmade jade, rhodonite and hematite necklaces and earrings. Unique items such as caribou hide masks, baleen and salt grass baskets and soapstone, jade and ivory carvings are also available. Many items are offered online and in the printed catalog.

6.3
CompuServe's SOFTEX℠ Software Catalog **SOFTEX**

CompuServe's SOFTEX is an electronic software catalog that enables you to purchase and receive commercial software through your personal computer, without the inconvenience of driving to a computer store or waiting for mail delivery. SOFTEX's growing selection includes popular commercially available software as well as hard-to-find software from smaller vendors. Selections include programming utilities, tutorials, spreadsheets, accounting packages and games for most personal computers.

Your machine requires terminal software that supports an error-checking file-transfer protocol, such as XMODEM or CompuServe's B protocol. Purchases are billed to your CompuServe account.

10.4.7
CENDATA™—The Census Bureau Service **CENDATA**

Now at your fingertips, the Census Bureau offers data on manufacturing, housing starts, population, agriculture and more to CompuServe subscribers. CENDATA lists tabular data and reports from the censuses conducted by the Census Bureau. If you are overwhelmed by all the information, CENDATA can give you a company to call in your area that specializes in making the most out of the census reports. They will help you get the exact information you need. Some of the data have already been condensed into reports that are available on CENDATA and answer specific questions, such as: "Where are the children?" and "What are the occupations with major employment gains for women?"

CENDATA also has the latest press releases from the Census Bureau and lists the Census Bureau representative in your state.

11.1.1
Adobe Forum **ADOBE**

Operated by the Adobe technical support staff, the Adobe Forum is for users, dealers, service bureaus, developers and other interested parties to discuss desktop publishing. This forum is especially of interest to users of Postscript printers, Adobe typefaces, Adobe Illustrator and Transcript. The forum's data libraries contain print and screen fonts that can be downloaded for both IBM PC and Macintosh computers, along with company press releases and new product announcements.

Super Modem™ 2400 Only $199.95 each

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The Communications Electronics Super Modem 2400 will send and receive full duplex data at 2,400, 1,200, 600 and 300 bits per second over your regular telephone line for only $199.95 each. **(Order # SM2400-PA)**

Communications Electronics Super Modem 2400 can operate 2,400, 1,200, 600,300 bps full duplex or half duplex over your regular voice grade telephone line. At 2,400 bps they are sync/async, over the switched network; CCITT V.22bis compatible. At 1,200 bps they are also sync/async over the switched network and are switchable between Bell 212 or CCITT V.22/V.23 compatibility. At 600 and 300 bps they are async over the switched network. At 600 bps they are CCITT, V.23 compatible and at 300 bps they are Bell 103 and CCITT V.21 compatible. The CCITT V.22 and V.23 compatibility makes these modems suitable for use worldwide.

The Super Modem 2400 automatically adjusts itself to match terminal's (or computer's) baud rate, parity and stop bits. The default setting is CCITT 2,400 bps but all parameters can be changed in the modem's non-volatile memory by using the extended "AT" command set. 11 status LED's are provided: Auto answer, off hook, high speed, DSR, RTS, DCD, TD, RD, RI, CTS and DTR. Switches are provided for constant carrier, holding DTR high, crossing pins 2 and 3, 11 bit characters and auto answer.

The modem is fully compatible with the Hayes® "AT" command set at all speeds and uses the new Hayes® 2400 commands for synchronous operation making the Super Modem 2400 compatible with virtually all IBM PC communications software. An internal speaker with software selectable volume is included. The Super Modem 2400 has an on-line help screen which shows communication parameters.

Super Modem 2400 Specifications

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MODULATION: FSK and PSK
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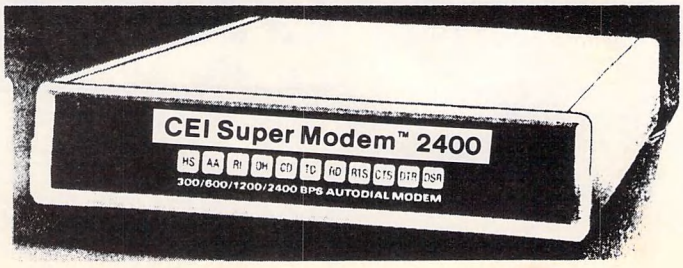
EQUALIZATION: Automatic adaptive
DIAGNOSTICS: Self test, local and remote analog and digital loopback
DCE interface (stand alone models) EIA RS232C
VF interface 10 foot cable with RJ-11 jack. FCC approved
DIMENSIONS: 8½" x 6¼" x 1½" – weight 1.5 lbs. (0.69 Kg.)

Hayes is a registered trade mark of Hayes Microcomputer Products Inc.

Order your Super Modem 2400 today.

5 year warranty



FLORA

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5¼ Same as above but bulk pack w/o envelope	6487-PA	0.33
5¼ DSDD Soft Sector w/Hub Ring Retail 10 pack	6491-PA	0.47
5¼ Same as above but bulk pack w/o envelope	6497-PA	0.37
5¼ DSHD for IBM PC/AT - bulk pack	6667-PA	1.29
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LaserJet Series II

Laser Printer

Hewlett-Packard
Peripherals Group
16399 W. Bernardo Dr.
San Diego, CA 92127
619/592-8068

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and compatibles; Hewlett-Packard Vectra; Apple IIe and Apple III; DEC Rainbow; others.
Features: Both serial and parallel interfaces; 512K RAM is standard; prints eight pages per minute and has 200 page sheet feeder and front panel controls.
Required Peripherals: Serial or parallel connector cord.
Options: Plug-in font cartridges; soft fonts; memory expansion up to 4MB.
System used for test: LaserJet Series II printer connected to 640K IBM PC-XT having Hercules Graphics Card Plus, two diskette drives and Maynard 20MB hard disk; running PC-DOS 3.1.
List Price: $2,595

Reviewed by William J. Lynott

If your only exposure to laser printers has been to the dinosaurs of two or three years ago, you're in for a pleasant surprise.

When Hewlett-Packard introduced the original LaserJet, it set the personal computer printing world on its ear. But refusing to rest on its laurels, Hewlett-Packard has kept refining, improving and lowering both weight and price. The result, called the LaserJet Series II, still is the one to beat. While there are other laser printers with individual features not offered on the LaserJet II, none offer a sharper overall package.

As revolutionary as the original LaserJet was, even its staunchest advocates admitted to a few annoyances. It was so heavy that one person couldn't handle it. Blacks weren't dense enough, especially over large areas, and finished pages came out face up in the wrong order. The Series II does away with those problems and adds more features.

In a major improvement, the user documentation has been completely redone. Now it is crisp, clear and easy to understand. The installation and setup manual, separate from the user manual, uses superb three-color illustrations that are as easy to follow as any I've seen. I was printing a test printout within 30 minutes of opening the carton.

I have only one argument with the user manual: It doesn't contain all the available printer commands. While most users will find all they need, power users with specialized needs will have to buy the optional LaserJet Series II Technical Reference Manual.

The front control panel is a joy. In place of the sometimes puzzling two-character messages from original LaserJets, the Series II sports a 16-character display with messages in plain English. While some messages aren't entirely self-explanatory, they're accompanied by the original two-letter codes that users still can look up. Most important, the intimidating DIP switches are gone. The front panel now lets you perform such tasks as changing default fonts, number of copies or paper source at the touch of a button.

The paper cassette has been redesigned to hold up to 200 sheets. In another improvement, an alternate paper path has been added to turn out face-down copies in proper order, so they don't have to be collated manually.

The LaserJet Series II still offers fewer built-in fonts than many of its competitors. This is no small consideration since extra font cartridges cost up to $250 each. But it does offer a few more than the older versions. Besides 10-pitch Courier in both landscape and portrait modes, it now offers Courier Bold in landscape and portrait plus a 16.6 pitch Line Printer font for squeezing lots of characters on a page. However, you may plug in two optional font cartridges at a time and print up to 16 fonts on the same page.

In physical appearance, the LaserJet II has all its predecessors outclassed. In contrast to the drab gray of the LaserJet Plus, the Series II is a cheery beige. And it is much smaller than its ancestors, weighing just 50 pounds.

Major technical specifications for the Series II are the same as the LaserJet Plus that it replaces. The rated speed is eight copies per minute, and it comes with a standard 512K RAM. The engine that drives the Series II is brand new, however. Like its predecessor, the new engine uses an all-in-one machine drum cartridge. New cartridges aren't interchangeable with old ones and cost a little more, but the new ones last longer and are rated for 4,000 pages instead of the previous 3,000 pages.

What really matters is performance, and that is where the LaserJet Series II shines. Print quality is outstanding. The blacks are as black and dense as I've seen on any computer printer, even over large, solid black areas. And operation is hush quiet.

My one complaint is that my Series II doesn't print with perfect alignment. Horizontal lines are off by about 1/32 inch—not much, but noticeable to the naked eye on certain types of pages. Hewlett-Packard responds to that with, "Sorry, any deviation up to 1/16 inch is considered within factory specs." An answer like that and a tolerance for such noticeable deviations seems inconsistent for a company that normally turns out top-quality products.

In every other way, though, my Series II passes my most critical tests.

William J. Lynott is president of W.J. Lynott Associates, a management consulting firm in suburban Philadelphia. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,420.

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Go Online for More Hardware Reviews

The following hardware reviews are available this month in *Online Today Daily Edition* (GO OLT-220).

TeleCat-286 Dual-Speed AT-Compatible Computer
Manufacturer: *TeleVideo Systems Inc.*
Computer: *TeleCat-286 (AT-compatible).*

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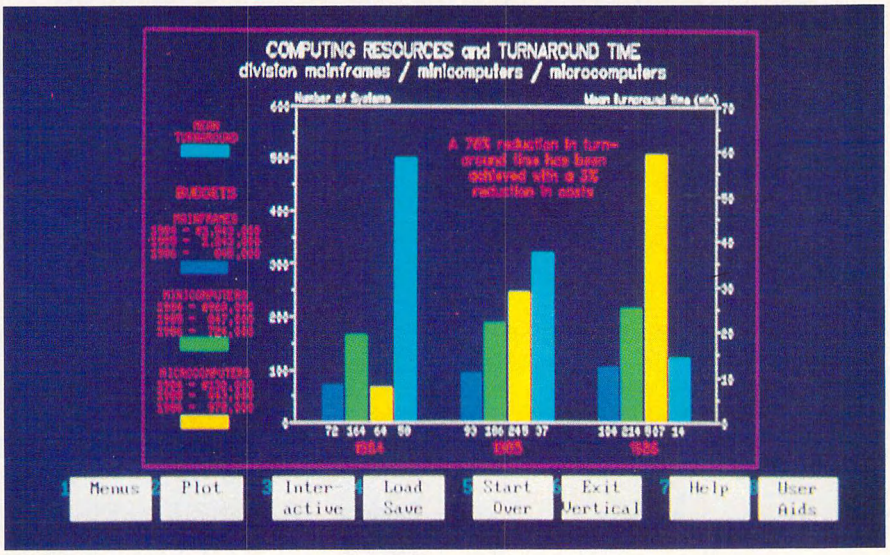
ONLINE TODAY

Database Management with Windows Filer 3.01

Palantir Software
12777 Jones Rd., #100
Houston, TX 77070
713/955-8880 or 800/368-3797

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and compatibles.
Operating System: PC-DOS or MS-DOS version 2.0 or higher.
Media: Requires two 360K diskette drives or one diskette drive and a fixed disk.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: Graphics adapter and appropriate color or monochrome monitor.
Other Requirements: Minimum 512K RAM; either free-standing or runtime Microsoft Windows operating environment.
Optional Items: Mouse is highly recommended.
System used for test: 640K IBM PC with one 360K diskette drive, one 10MB, Hercules Graphics Card, monochrome monitor, Toshiba P351 printer and Microsoft Mouse.
List Price: $195

Reviewed by Harry Green



Database manager from Microsoft Windows environment: *Windows Filer 3.01*

Palantir Software has developed several programs that operate under the Microsoft Windows environment. The programs are called directly from Windows and operate with the pull-down menus, symbols and mouse clicks familiar to anyone who uses Windows. One such program, Windows Filer (version 3.01), is a database manager with the features needed to construct a simple database. It is most suitable for mailing lists, small inventory files and similar applications that don't require the power of a full-blown database management system such as dBase.

The three major steps of database creation—developing input forms, defining the database and designing reports—are accomplished easily with Windows Filer. In fact, the first two steps are combined into one operation. To create the input form and database, just name the database, click the mouse button or press a function key to choose the edit mode, and create the input form on a blank screen. Field identifications are typed on the screen, and lengths are specified by bracket characters.

For example, a five-digit ZIP code field would be delimited with left and right brackets having three spaces between them. It isn't even necessary to name the fields unless you plan to use a command file (discussed later). Fields can be arranged any way you choose, but it pays to define them carefully at the outset because the program has no editor for cutting and pasting.

When the database has been defined and saved, you're ready to start typing items. Data entry is conventional. An image of the input screen you created is displayed for each record. At the end of the record, click the mouse or press a function key to save it. The program provides for indexing records, and you also can resort the database on any field.

The Windows Filer command structure takes it beyond simple list managers. At the end of the input form you can enter commands to control report creation and perform limited editing. The first step in constructing the command file is to name all of the fields in the database sequentially; then they can be addressed by name. For example, the command "Autoskip phone" would let you advance the cursor automatically between fields in a nine-digit telephone number. Arithmetic operators are used to perform calculations as in the command "Net = Gross * 0.95."

The command file isn't difficult to create, but its functions are limited. It makes no provisions for requiring a field to be filled, rejecting numeric data in alphabetic fields, or preventing extraneous characters in a Boolean field that should contain only "Y" or "N."

Reports are created in the command file by using a similar set of instructions. Commands define the page size, make calculations on fields, number pages, print headers, print footers and total columns.

Windows Filer creates files compatible with dBase II and III. It also can file and display pictures created with applications such as Windows Paint or compatible programs. As with other Windows applications, you can change the dimensions of a picture with a mouse. You also can copy pictures to and from the database with Windows' Clipboard function. The program comes with an impressive demonstration file that stores statistical information about each state in the United States and displays that data with pictures of the states.

The manual indicates that Windows Filer comes with a runtime version of Microsoft Windows, which would make it unnecessary to buy Windows before using Windows Filer. However, the runtime module was missing from the single, sealed disk furnished for this review, so it could not be tested. Instead, I ran Windows Filer under my own copy of the full, commercial Microsoft Windows environment.

Windows Filer isn't intended for heavy-duty database applications, but if you're a Windows fan and need a small database, you'll find it easy to learn and almost instinctive to follow after you've completed its short tutorial.

Harry Green is president of Pacific Netcom Inc., a Portland, Ore., firm that consults with businesses on using office automation and telecommunications to improve productivity. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,431.

GO OLI or circle 10 on the Reader Service Form.

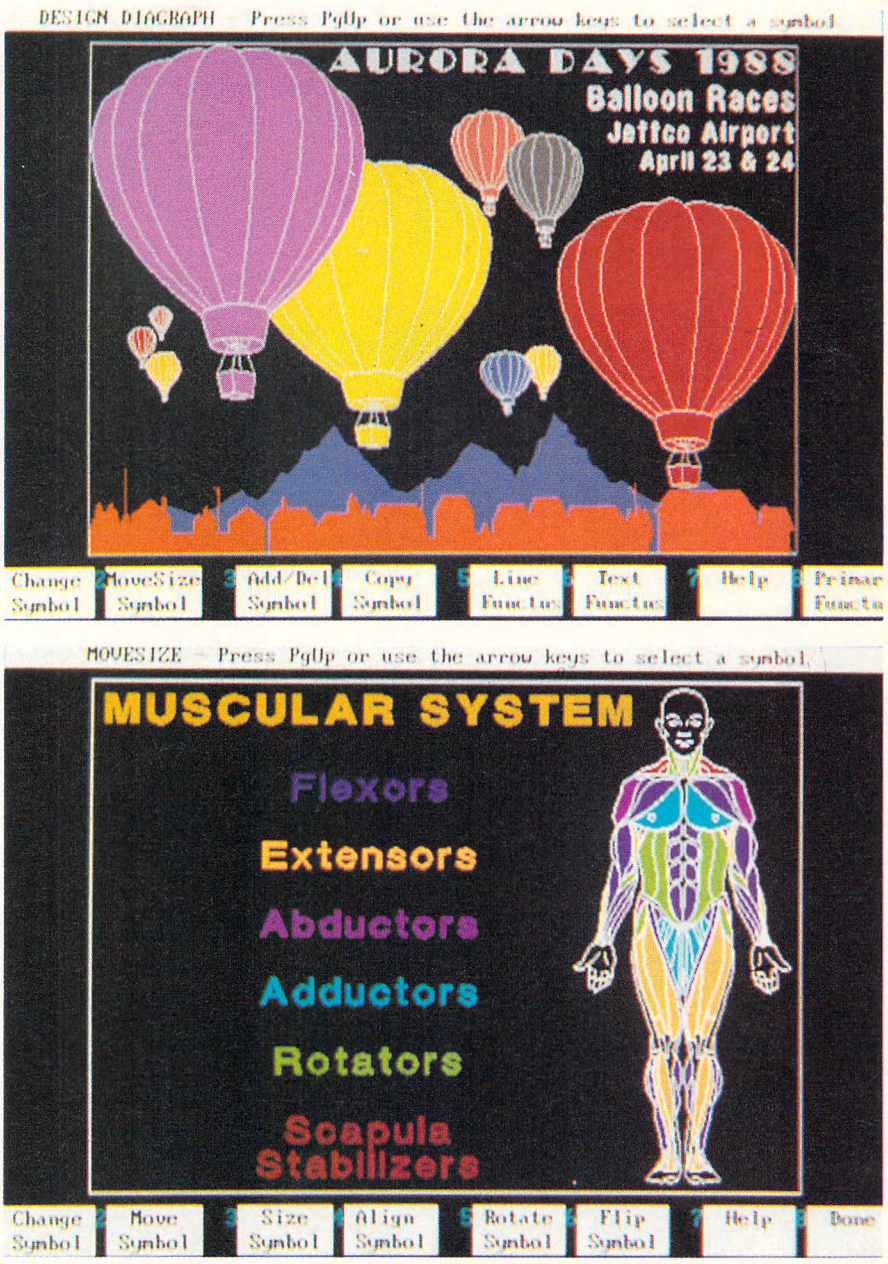
Diagraph and Picture Perfect

For Presentation Graphics

Computer Support Corp.
2215 Midway Rd.
Carrollton, TX 75006
214/661-8960

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and compatible computers; also available for IBM PS/2, HP Vectra PC, AT&T 6300 or Zenith 150/158.
Operating Systems: PC-DOS or MS-DOS version 2.0 or higher.
Media: Diagraph and Picture Perfect each are supplied on nine diskettes; requires two diskette drives or a diskette drive and a hard disk (hard disk highly recommended).
Copy Protection: Both programs are copy protected; may be run with a key disk in drive A or installed once to hard disk for running without key disk.
Required Peripherals: Color or graphics monitor with suitable video adapter (each supports numerous adapters including IBM CGA, IBM EGA, IBM VGA, Hercules Monochrome and others).
Other Requirements: Diagraph and Picture Perfect each need at least 512K of RAM.
Optional Items: 8087 or 80287 math coprocessor highly recommended; program support various graphics-capable printers, pen plotters and film recorders; Diagraph supports both optional symbol libraries and optional font libraries; Picture Perfect supports optional font libraries.
System used for test: 1024K Proteus 286GT (PC-AT compatible) with two diskette drives, one 20MB fixed disk, two 15MB Sysgen DuraPak cartridge drives, 80287 math coprocessor, ATI EGA Wonder video card, Amdek Color 722 monitor, Epson FX-85 printer and Hewlett-Packard 7475A Graphics Plotter; running IBM PC-DOS 3.10 at 6 and 12 MHz.
List Prices: $395 for Diagraph and $295 for Picture Perfect ($595 for the set); additional Diagraph symbol libraries cost $59 to $129 each depending on type, complexity and number of symbols in each; additional font libraries cost $25 each.

Reviewed by Ernest E. Mau



Fine for making forms, signs, maps, diagrams and drawings: *Diagraph/2000*

When I last wrote about Diagraph and Picture Perfect for *Online Today* (November 1986 electronic and January 1987 print editions), I admired both programs but recognized some distinct limitations. Both now have gone through a couple of revisions, both have been improved, and both have reached version 4.0. Furthermore, Diagraph now bears the name Diagraph/2000.

The two programs serve different though related purposes. Diagraph is a presentation graphics package for making diagrams, drawings, maps, signs, forms and similar materials. It does so primarily by pasting symbols into place, occasionally drawing some lines and adding appropriate text. I'd call Diagraph an illustrative program since it has no data charting or graphing functions of its own. Picture Perfect provides the data graphing and charting with considerable power for bar, line, pie and mixed chart types, but it has no drawing or illustrative features other than the ability to use selected typefaces shared with Diagraph.

Diagraph continues to put its stock in extensive symbol and font libraries sold by the program developer. It includes some 2,200 predrawn symbols in the basic package, with several thou-

sand more available in extra-cost supplemental libraries. Symbols are as diverse as simple icons and borders, ranging to complex maps (United States only), anatomical drawings and even process flow symbols. Diagraph also can use more than three dozen typefaces, most purchased separately.

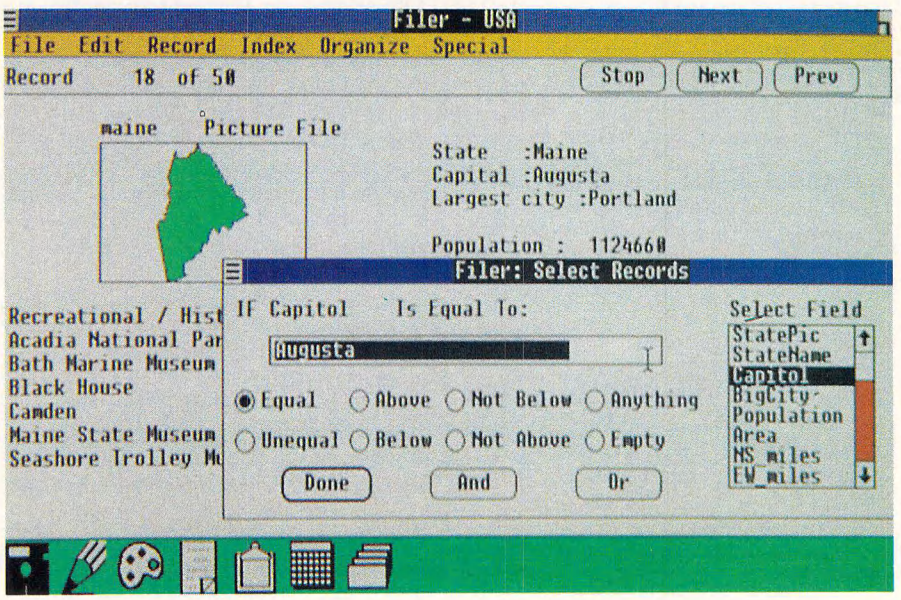
The basic process of creating a drawing involves picking symbols from libraries by their numbers (using a symbol book or a user-created symbol template as a guide), positioning them on the screen, moving and sizing them as needed and setting controls for line type, outline color, fill color, fill pattern and so on. Symbols also may be flipped horizontally or vertically, rotated, aligned, copied or completely changed at will. The process continues symbol by symbol until the desired illustration has been built. Text is added in a similar manner, and limited line-drawing facilities can connect symbol "nodes" for drawing flow charts, organizational charts, schematic diagrams and the like.

Version 4.0 supports all original functions, such as line and solid filling, but also provides versatile raster shading patterns with variable density, the ability to hide bottom symbols when overlapping elements (for certain output devices) and shadow text. There remain some complications to "clipping" symbols for output to vector devices such as pen plotters.

Yet Diagraph remains sharply limited. As examples, a user cannot alter a symbol by drawing or erasing lines, and only one predetermined fillable area per symbol is provided. Nor can a user create new symbols or symbol libraries, meaning the user is restricted to the images obtained from or made to order by Computer Support Corp. Diagraph still cannot import data, text or graphics from other sources and still cannot be used to dress up spreadsheet graphs. The result is a sharply defined limit imposed on the user's creativity.

Meanwhile, Picture Perfect is a tremendous data graphing and charting program that is remarkably easy to use considering the complexity of the charts it can turn out. The user needs no drawing ability to make impressive charts from numeric data.

Picture Perfect can use numeric data entered into tables from the keyboard or data imported from other programs. It can import data via ASCII fixed-format, ASCII variable-format and DIF files, giving it the ability to chart numbers extracted from most popular data-



Perfect data graphing and charting program for presentations: *Picture Perfect*

bases and spreadsheets without retyping.

The program prepares horizontal bar, vertical bar, pie and mixed bar/line charts. Bar charts can use basic, clustered, overlaying or stacked formats. Up to four pies now can be placed in a single chart, and the pies can be exploded, have slices sorted and have the slices separated by spaces. However, the most intriguing graphs remain the mixed bar/line combinations, especially when top and bottom charts on a single page can be similar, different or combinations of types. Picture Perfect does not offer bubble charts, spectral distribution charts, Gantt charts, pie/bar combinations or other elaborate graphs, but it does a superb job with what it does have.

An addition to Picture Perfect 4.0 is the ability to "crossload" files, letting the user do such things as create a horizontal bar chart and later load that file into the vertical bar module. As a means of changing graph formats, the technique is crude compared with other programs around, and the results aren't always pleasing, especially when text gets in the way. Yet this facility at least allows changing chart types for a given set of data.

Naturally, Picture Perfect affords extensive control over lines, colors, filling, text fonts and text positions. All these features combine to make effective and attractive business graphs.

The developer considers Diagraph and Picture Perfect companion products and even packages them together at a reduced price. But they are stretching a point. The two may have similar appearances and similar menu structures, but they don't actually work together. Nothing but a few fonts are shared between the programs, and no outputs from either can move to the other.

Essentially, Diagraph remains a tightly "closed" system, though the developer claims to be working on ways to change that. But at version 4.0, Diagraph cannot be used to decorate or dress up charts developed with Picture Perfect. That puts it at a noticeable disadvantage compared with its major competitor, Lotus Freelance Plus, in which charting, graphics, symbol paste up, CAD-like drawing, purchased or user-generated libraries and other features are integrated and truly complement one another.

For users not needing the integration of charting and illustrative functions, however, both Diagraph and Picture Perfect are great systems. I like both programs and use both extensively, though I wish the developer would get rid of their awkward and confining diskette copy protection.

Ernest E. Mau, a full-time free-lance writer and Online Today *reviews editor, is based in Aurora, Colo. He is the author of several books and nearly 300 articles on microcomputer products and applications.*

GO OLI or circle 11 on the Reader Service Form.

Tree86

Enhances DOS in a Colorful Way

The Aldridge Co.
2500 City West Blvd., #575
Houston, TX 77042
713/953-1940 or 800/548-5019

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT, PS/2 and compatibles.
Operating Systems: PC-DOS and MS-DOS version 2.0 or higher.
Media: Requires at least one diskette drive.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: None.
Other Requirements: Minimum 140K RAM.
Optional Items: CGA, EGA or VGA video card with appropriate color monitor; mouse; distribution available on 3.5-inch diskettes.
Systems used for test: (1) 512K IBM PC with one 360K diskette drive and color monitor; running PC-DOS 3.10. (2) 640K IBM PC with 20MB hard disk and Princeton HX-12E color monitor; running PC-DOS 3.10.
List Price: $49.95

Reviewed by James Moran

Tree86 (version 1.00), a DOS file-enhancement utility, would be most useful to those with hard disks, but it will run on a diskette-only system. The developer believes that Tree86 makes file maintenance easier, faster and "more fun." Whether it provides such benefits for you depends on the sophistication of your system and your needs.

Installation is simple and quick. You need only copy the distribution diskette to a hard disk. If your system has only diskette drives, the programs should be copied to a working diskette. However, Tree86 probably is more software than you need unless you have a hard disk.

Tree86 enables EGA and VGA users to customize the system with color options available only to them. If a system includes these capabilities, special installation options will help optimize screen colors for the monitor. However, even colors for CGA monitors can be customized with an easily implemented option. To modify standard start-up colors, IBM's DEBUG utility or an equivalent must be available.

Tree86 isn't yet a memory-resident utility. It must be specifically executed. On start-up, it automatically scans the default drive and displays a graphics tree of the directories. The presentation is simple and uncluttered, and it includes a window for using other Tree86 functions. It's possible to override the default drive on start-up by supplying an optional drive parameter. Of course, the drive designation also can be changed once the software is running.

While the left two-thirds of the monitor screen contains the graphics directory tree, the right side contains a general information bar. Within that bar is information about the default drive, including the number of directories; total disk space available and free; number of directories, files and hidden files; and some general system information including DOS release and system memory statistics.

Although a screen with this much information should appear cluttered, this one doesn't, in part because varying colors are used to highlight certain information. For monochrome monitors, the same effect is achieved with the judicious use of high, low and reversed intensity fields. While having EGA or VGA capability may widen the choice of color presentations, there is no operational benefit to be gained from these broadened color capabilities. The real advantage for EGA and VGA users becomes evident when a lot of information is presented. By using a "zoom" option, users with advanced graphics capabilities can display up to 50 rows of information at one time.

Most Tree86 utilities are chosen from a command bar running across the top of the screen. Mouse capability is built into Tree86 and can be used for choosing a selection from the command bar or for navigating through the rest of the utility. Since most Tree86 operations may be selected by keying only the first letter of the desired command, mouse usage is not a necessity.

From the command bar, you can move, copy, erase, sort, print and perform various other file operations. Since files can be tagged either individually or in groups, operations are not restricted to one file at a time. All operations performed as expected, but it would have been better had the view operation been enhanced to allow backward scrolling through a file.

Editing files is performed by using your word processor, and Tree86 will link to it automatically once you supply the proper procedure within a batch file. If there is an operation you would prefer to perform under DOS, Tree86 enables you to link to it also.

The developer plans to support and upgrade this program for the DOS environment and to release an OS/2 version in 1988. Although I didn't try it, the developer says the current version has been tested and works properly in the DOS compatibility mode of OS/2.

Throughout, Tree86 provides all the benefits of standard DOS operations, but it is much more convenient to use. Such little touches as a full line editor and a hexadecimal viewing capability make this a utility program that is worth adding to your system.

James Moran is a free-lance writer and frequent contributor to Online Today. *His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,2253.*

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RSVP

Helps You Avoid Professional Embarrassment

Blue Lion Software
P.O. Box 650
Belmont, MA 02178
617/876-2500

Computers: Commodore 64 and 128.
Operating System: Commodore DOS.
Media: Requires one Commodore-compatible 5.25-inch diskette drive.
Copy Protection: Protected; no backup provided.
Required Peripherals: Monitor.
Other Requirements: None.
Optional Items: None.
System used for test: Commodore 128D with Commodore 1571 diskette drive and Commodore 2002 monitor.
Retail Price: $29.95

Reviewed by Cheryl Peterson

If, like me, you skipped the business etiquette course in college, you may wonder if there aren't times when you may be doing the "wrong thing." Finding books about appropriate "business behavior" on the best-seller list would have seemed ludicrous in the late 1970s or even the early '80s. But today, even the computer industry offers a "how to" software guide for learning social graces. While RSVP deals with "consumer etiquette," most situations are applicable to the business environment.

Many business people must travel to other countries but may not know the local customs. RSVP features information on 18 countries in Asia, South America, Europe and the Pacific. And it could save you from making the *faux pas* that could cost you a business deal.

RSVP offers two operating modes: practice and game. The goal in the game is to become a "biggie" in your profession by making the right moves

in business and social engagements. You must climb the corporate ladder to such positions as chairman of the board, head of import/export, president of the Middle East division, or president of banking for South America.

Once you've typed in your name and profession, you are presented with a calendar of appointments for the next few months, including business meetings, tasks and social events. You're then asked questions relating to each entry. Some are easy, others are difficult, and you'll certainly discover your weak points by the time you finish.

You can accumulate points by noting special hints the program occasionally presents. Count on seeing related questions later. For example, if the program says Fritz likes Burgundy, a question will appear later asking which wine to serve when Fritz comes to dinner.

"Brownie points" are given for remembering what you've already done. The program occasionally asks questions such as, "Who did you have lunch with last week?"

As you progress, the program delivers reports on your advancement. Sometimes these are general: "You're really moving now." Other times they're more specific: "Congratulations are in order, Senior Editor."

In practice mode, you are given a series of questions relating to a topic of your choice. You can choose from general subjects such as dining or introductions and from country-specific topics. The questions are presented, and ones you miss are reviewed so you can take a second shot at them. If a third pass is required, only multiple-choice questions are presented. When you've answered all questions correctly, the program summarizes the number of questions asked and how many were correctly answered on the first try. Scores are presented as the numbers correct and as percentages.

There is no way to quickly ascertain correct answers. With multiple-choice questions in practice mode, you could eventually find which answer is right by trying them all. But questions requiring a typed response leave you in the dark. If you don't know that the English subway is called "the tube," you won't find out from this program. Since RSVP's purpose is to teach, this is annoying.

A "thanks to" section gives an idea of where questions came from, but I would have appreciated a bibliography helped. Other than that, the documentation was adequate.

Like many Commodore programs, the RSVP diskette is copy-protected. This can be potentially disastrous since the program saves scores and progress information on the diskette. Meanwhile, data for the program is so voluminous that it takes both sides of a diskette.

This program showed more creativity than I expected. It is original and presents a solid learning opportunity in an entertaining manner.

Cheryl Peterson, a free-lance writer from Miami Beach, writes reviews for several computer magazines.

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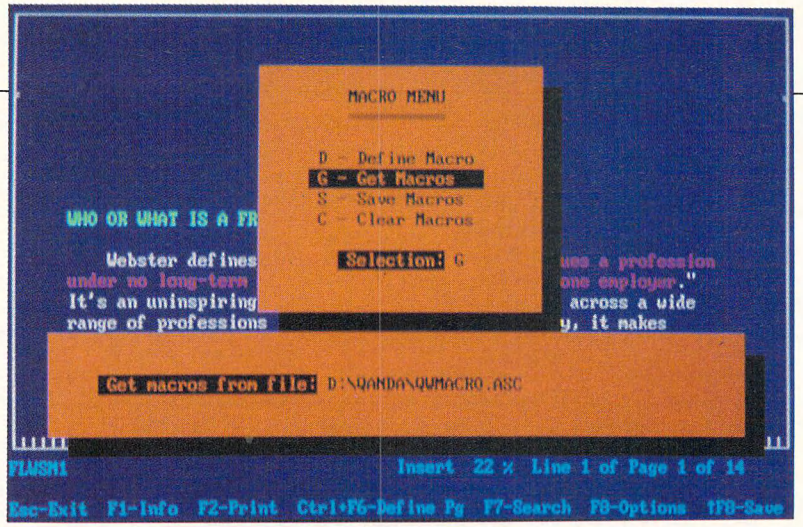
MACRO MENU
D - Define Macro
G - Get Macros
S - Save Macros
C - Clear Macros
Selection: G
Get macros from file: D:\QANDA\QUMACRO.ASC
Insert 22 % Line 1 of Page 1 of 14
Esc-Exit F1-Info F2-Print Ctrl+F6-Define Pg F7-Search F8-Options

Powerful but inexpensive word processor for IBM PCs: *Q&A Write*

Q&A Write Word Processor:

Powerful but Inexpensive

Symantec
10201 Torre Ave.
Cupertino, CA 95014
408/253-9600 or 800/556-1234

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT, PS/2 Models 30/50/60/80 and compatibles.
Operating Systems: PC-DOS or MS-DOS version 2.0 or higher.
Media: Program supplied on two 5.25-inch diskettes.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: None.
Other Requirements: Minimum 384K RAM (512K for some systems).
Optional Items: 640K RAM; hard disk; printer; color monitor.
System used for test: 512K Victor V286 computer with 80286 processor, 20MB hard disk, EGA monitor and video card and Apple LaserWriter printer; running MS-DOS 3.2.
List Price: $199

Reviewed by Franklyn Jones

In days gone by, you had to pay several hundred dollars to get a top quality word processor. Not anymore. During the last year, we've seen more and more companies introduce inexpensive but surprisingly powerful word processors for IBM-style personal computers. Symantec's Q&A Write is evidence of this trend toward better and less costly software.

Q&A Write has all the basic features you'd expect in a word processor, including search and replace, cut and paste, headers, footers and automatic this just another basic word processor, so they added such advanced features as an integrated spelling checker, line and box drawing, multicolumn printing, math capabilities, mail-merging macro support and laser printer support. If you're not yet impressed, you get all this at about half the cost of the "leading" word processors.

Q&A Write installs quickly and creates its own subdirectory on a hard disk. After starting the program, the first thing you see is a main menu containing eight options, such as Type/Edit, Get and Save. The Get command enables you to retrieve, copy, rename or delete files from any directory on the hard disk. Q&A Write also can import from WordStar, Lotus, Symphony or any ASCII file.

Once you've loaded a document, you'll see four special lines at the bottom of the screen for ruler, status, message and key assignment. The latter, positioned along the bottom row, reminds you which keys are available to execute selected commands.

Q&A Write uses several Control and Function key combinations to execute commands or reach secondary menus where you can select other related command options. This may sound threatening, but it is easy to learn and use. For example, [CONTROL-F6] takes you to the Define Page menu, where you can tab through the various fields necessary to set margins, page length and so on. If you don't like the way commands are organized, you can use the macro facility to redefine keystrokes.

One powerful feature is Q&A Write's Card File. This is the facility used for mail-merge applications, but it also functio[illegible]s a mini-database. In Manager, dBase and many other databases. The Card File can store up to 1,000 records, each having up to 180 fields and 240 characters per field. In addition, this facility provides several search-and-sort options. On the minus side, however, the screen format is predefined and apparently cannot be altered to meet special needs.

Q&A Write supports all necessary text enhancement options such as boldfacing, italicizing and underlining. But these attributes do not appear on screen as they do on the printed page. Instead of being a true what-you-see-is-what-you-get word processor, Q&A Write uses a highlighted screen representation with a comment on the message line stating what attribute is being used. If you're planning desktop publishing applications, keep this in mind.

Printing a document is fairly easy. The first step is to install printers from the Utilities menu. Q&A Write supports most popular dot-matrix printers, the Hewlett-Packard LaserJet and such PostScript devices as the Apple LaserWriter. You can install up to five printers through Q&A Write. Once installation is complete, you can move to the Print Options menu where you select a particular printer from those installed and then set the number of copies or columns. Then you're ready to print. Incidentally, you can modify the default settings of the Print Options menu if you think it will save you keystrokes.

The documentation for Q&A Write is thin but generally complete and well illustrated. However, I believe this program is powerful enough that user's would benefit from a good third-party book on its operation. A good context-sensitive online help facility is available at a keystroke.

I have virtually no complaints about Q&A Write. I feel its functionality and versatility are comparable to Microsoft Word. Q&A Write has nearly every feature you would need at a bargain price. Even more surprising is the fact that Symantec crammed all this functionality onto two diskettes. My hat goes off to the programmers responsible for Q&A Write.

If your word processing budget is less than $200, this product deserves your serious consideration.

Franklyn Jones was formerly the managing editor of Interface Age *magazine and editor-in-chief of* IBM PC Update *magazine. He has written articles for various computer publications, is a regular contributor to* Online Today *and serves as a mar-*

LaserScript 2.0

Desktop Publishing Software

Command Technology
1900 Mountain Blvd.
Oakland, CA 94611
415/339-3530

Computers: IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and compatibles.
Operating Systems: PC-DOS or MS-DOS version 2.0 or higher.
Media: Hard disk required.
Copy Protection: None.
Required Peripherals: Hewlett-Packard LaserJet Plus, LaserJet Series II or compatible laser printer.
Other Requirements: Minimum 512K RAM; downloadable soft fonts or font cartridges in standard Hewlett-Packard format.
Optional Items: Graphics software such as AutoCAD.
System used for test: 640K IBM PC-XT with Hercules Graphics Card Plus, two diskette drives, Maynard 20MB hard disk and Hewlett-Packard LaserJet Series II printer; running PC-DOS 3.1.
List Price: $695

Reviewed by William J. Lynott

In desktop publishing, what-you-see-is-what-you-get onscreen formatting is the rage. The two most popular packages, Aldus PageMaker and Ventura Publisher, take the place of the old layout board. They let you "cut and paste" your electronic images until the layout of each page looks just right.

For certain work, the WYSIWYG principle is a dream come true. This is especially true for such short documents as newsletters and similar materials that combine graphics and text in different combinations on each page. The old paste pot, cutting knife and T-square won't be missed by anyone who does that type of page layout.

But there are distinct disadvantages to the WYSIWYG approach for other publishing projects, such as long documents in which each page is laid out in essentially the same style. Since each page must be treated as a separate entity when working with WYSIWYG, there can be a lot of repeated effort. If the document is several hundred pages long, the job could become overwhelming.

Furthermore, many page-layout programs hold the entire document in memory while you work on it. That imposes size restrictions based on available RAM and may not even allow long documents to be composed.

Enter the so-called "style guide" programs such as LaserScript (version 2.0). LaserScript may not appear so dramatic as the page-layout packages, but it offers a way to specify all necessary parameters for a document in a single command file. This puts the computer to work laying out each page as it prints so it conforms to the definitions in the master style guide. The only limit to the document size is the capacity of the storage media.

Numerous style guide publishing programs are available, but few are as sophisticated as LaserScript. Virtually any definitions for page layout can be embedded in text as it is created in a word processor. Each component of the document is called a text element. Paragraphs, chapters, headers and footers are examples of text elements. All you must do is identify the text elements in your document as you enter them.

For example, if you enter a simple bulleted list, you insert [b1] just ahead of the text. The beginning of a new paragraph is identified by inserting [p]. Even items to be included in the table of contents or index can be identified as they are typed, and font selections are indicated with embedded commands.

Footers, headers, tables, headlines and virtually any specifications necessary to lay out each page can be incorporated into the document during its creation. This guarantees a consistency that is difficult to attain when each page is laid out individually.

Using LaserScript commands, you may create tables with headings and any number of columns. Sizing columns is automated and depends on the width of the text entered. You may even shade individual cells to create the effect of conventional screening.

LaserScript also will import, integrate and subsequently print graphics obtained from such programs as AutoCAD or Lotus 1-2-3.

LaserScript isn't the kind of software that you'll learn to use after one or two sessions at the computer. Instead, it is a no-nonsense, professional-level package for serious publishing work. While there is nothing especially difficult in putting it to work (absolutely no programming knowledge is required), it does require more mental effort and more time to learn than most of the simple packages that masquerade as desktop publishing tools.

And there is a disadvantage to the LaserScript approach that will be significant to some potential users: Since LaserScript doesn't show pages laid out neatly on the display screen, it is not the best tool for someone who likes to fuss endlessly with a page or who works with short documents that require complex integration of large amounts of graphics.

On the other hand, someone producing mostly long documents with a consistent style for page layout could save countless hours of work by letting LaserScript and the computer lay out the pages as directed.

William J. Lynott is president of W.J. Lynott Associates, a management consulting firm in suburban Philadelphia. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,420.

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PaperClip III Word Processor With Spell Checking
Manufacturer: *Batteries Included Inc.*
Computers: *Commodore 64 and 128.*

Desktop VizaWrite Word Processor
Manufacturer: *Progressive Peripherals and Software Inc.*
Computer: *Commodore Amiga.*

Webster's New World Combo Proofreader and Thesaurus
Manufacturer: *Simon and Schuster Software*
Computers: *IBM compatibles.*

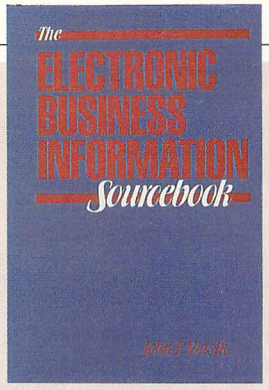
Webster's New World Outliner+
Manufacturer: *Simon and Schuster Software*
Computers: *IBM compatibles.*

Boeing Calc Three-Dimensional Spreadsheet
Manufacturer: *Garrison Software*
Computers: *IBM compatibles.*

Turbo Basic Database Toolbox
Manufacturer: *Borland International*
Computers: *IBM compatibles.*

PC/Label Master System
Manufacturer: *Best Programs Inc.*
Computers: *IBM compatibles.*

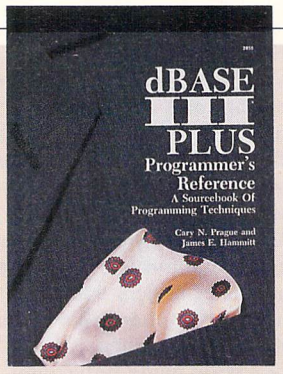
BOOK REVIEW



The Electronic Business Information Sourcebook

By John F. Wasik
John Wiley & Sons, 1987
208 pages, $19.95 (hardcover)

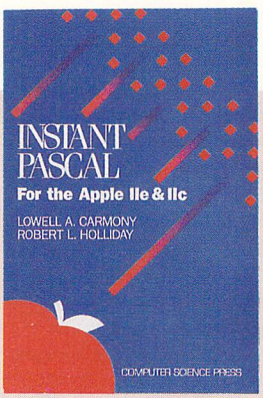
This book is a primer for business people who want to learn about using online databases, according to reviewer William J. Lynott. The author presents a non-technical approach with basic explanations of databases and how they work.



dBase III Plus Programmer's Reference: A Sourcebook of Programming Techniques

By Cary N. Prague and James E. Hammit
TAB Books, 1987
232 pages; $18.95 (softcover)

This book is written for the intermediate dBase III Plus user in easy-to-understand language. Reviewer William J. Lynott says the tricks and timesavers presented make it far more informative than the dBase documentation.



Instant Pascal for the Apple IIe and IIc

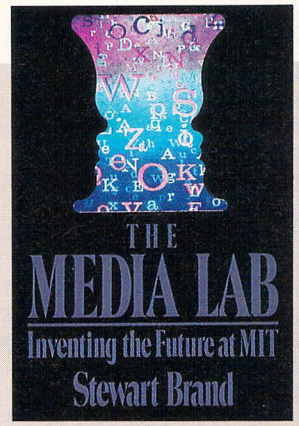
By Lowell A. Carmony and Robert L. Holliday
Computer Science Press, 1987
397 pages, $26.95

This book will give Apple users the information they need to become competent Pascal programmers. Reviewer James Moran says the book, which explores the use of Instant Pascal through the development of problem-solving skills, is appropriate for novice, intermediate and advanced programmers.

Power Portable Computing: The IBM PC Convertible

By Dick Conklin
John Wiley & Sons, 1987
386 pages, $19.95 (softcover)

Written exclusively for the IBM PC Convertible owner, this book provides complete information on using the built-in applications as well as the Application Selector. Reviewer Brian D. Monahan commends the illustrations, worthwhile ideas and concrete information found here.



The Media Lab: Inventing the Future at MIT

By Stewart Brand
Viking Press, 1987
285 pages, $20 (hardcover)

Calling the book fascinating, reviewer Robert Sanchez says it shows the reader the wonder of the world of innovation at MIT through an entertaining mixture of interviews, color photos of Lab activities, excellent reportage and subjective musings.

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ONLINE TODAY

Pro/One System

The Professional System/One (or Pro/One) from Profit Technology is a direct aim at IBM's PS/2 series of computers.

Advantages of the Pro/One include outstanding speed, upwards/downwards compatibility, multiple-computer abilities, flexibility and a "peripheral friendly" design. Pro/One is fully compatible with the IBM PS/2, PC-XT and PC-AT models. Most of the models feature a "smart" dual speed capability that makes it possible to run both the new higher speed 3.5-inch disks and existing 5.25-inch software.

For information, contact Profit Technology Inc., 17 Battery Pl., 14th Floor, New York, NY 10004; 212/809-3500.

Autodial Plus Modem

Concord Data Systems has introduced the 224 Autodial Plus and its error-correcting version, the 224 Autodial Plus-E, to its 2400-baud, full-duplex dial modem family.

Features include the Concord command set compatibility, Hayes AT24 compatibility, extensive configuration capabilities to interface with a variety of user equipment, selectable two-wire leased-line operation and optional MNP Class 4 error correction. The 224 Autodial Plus sells for $425, and the Plus-E retails for $595.

For information, contact Concord Data Systems Inc., 397 Williams St., Marlborough, MA 01752.

BBS Software Upgraded

Wildcat!, a bulletin board system program from Mustang Software, has been upgraded.

Targeted at the business market, version 1.10 delivers more configurable options without requiring power user status. A key enhancement is support for additional file-transfer protocols, including Kermit, YMODEM, IMODEM, YMODEM-G, MegaLink, ZMODEM and WXMODEM, as well as standard ASCII and XMODEM. In addition, Wildcat! offers a live program option that allows the user to run other applications from outside the program code via menu selections.

Wildcat! sells for $129 plus $6 shipping and handling and can be ordered from Mustang Software, 3125 19th St., Suite 162, Bakersfield, CA 93301-3118; 805/395-0223.

Hot Line II Phone Directory

General Information has introduced Hot Line II, the first electronic telephone directory and power dialer for the IBM PC and compatibles.

Hot Line II adds dBase III and network compatibility, new editing and dialing features, unlimited storage capacity and enhanced built-in directories containing vital business information. Improved dialing functions offer routines users can pre-set for long-distance, international, intra-office, credit-card, WATS or PBX calls. Users can instantly find any listing and dial it with a single keystroke. Retail price is $75; original owners of Hot Line can upgrade for $35.

For information, contact General Information Inc., 401 Parkplace, Kirkland, WA 98033; 206/828-4777.

The Works! Integrated Software for Amiga

The Works! from MicroSystems Software contains a powerful electronic spreadsheet module, a full-featured word processor module and a database manager module for the Amiga computer.

The spreadsheet features an extensive Macro Language, eight- or 16-color graphics and more than 40 built-in mathematical functions. The word processor offers full-style control, a user expandable 40,000-word dictionary, a spelling checker and a mail-merge feature. The professional data manager provides relational search or query functions and the ability to index on any or all fields. The retail price is $199.95.

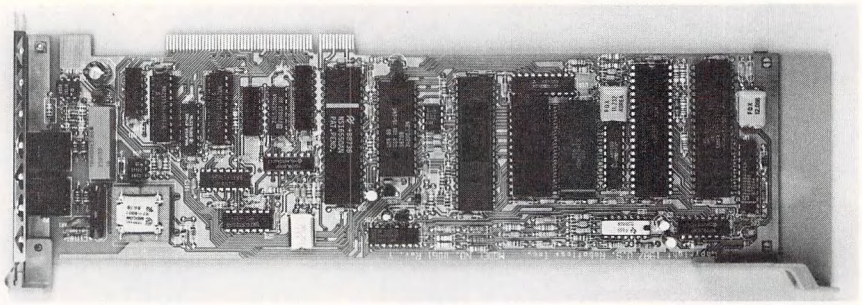
For information, contact MicroSystems Software Inc., 12798 W. Forest Hill Blvd., Suite 202, West Palm Beach, FL 33414; 305/790-0772.

Lap-Link Plus

Traveling Software has introduced Lap-Link Plus, a high-speed serial-transfer package that lets IBM PC-compatible laptops share disk drives and printers with other IBM or compatible computers, including laptops and PS/2s.

Using ordinary serial ports and a 6-foot cable, users can achieve transfer speeds of more than 115,000 baud. It is ideal for a user who would like to access a printer or application directly from a laptop or remote desktop computer, for backing up hard disks or for running or installing 5.25-inch copy-protected software using a 3.5-inch disk computer. Lap-Link Plus retails for $139.95. Owners of Lap-Link can upgrade for $19.95.

For information, contact Traveling Software Inc., North Creek Corporate Center, 19310 N. Creek Parkway, Bothell, WA 98011.

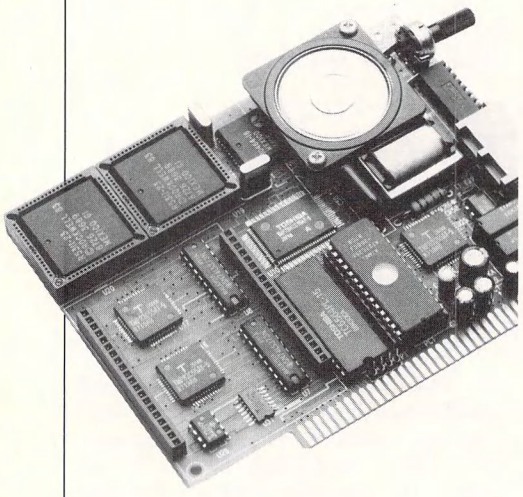


PS/2 Modem

US Robotics has introduced the Courier 2400e/PS modem designed for internal use in IBM's PS/2 Models 50, 60 and 80.

Features include 2400/1200/300 baud, although it can achieve effective speeds up to 4800 baud through data-compression, and MNP data-compression and error-control. The retail price is $699.

For information, contact U.S. Robotics Inc., 8100 N. McCormick Blvd., Skokie, IL 60076; 312/982-5010.



Upgradable Modems

Telenetics has introduced 1200-, 2400- and 9600-baud modems with MNP error control for the IBM PC, PS/2 and compatible computers. Available as internal cards, models TC921I and TC921PS can be used to meet current needs as 1200- or 2400-baud modems, and later, as network requirements increase, they can be upgraded to 9600 baud without reinvesting in new hardware. Features include full- or half-duplex that can be configured to operate over dial-up or leased lines and automatic adaptive equalization. Data format can be synchronous or asynchronous. Both models retail for $595.

For information, contact Telenetics Corp., 895 E. Yorba Linda Blvd., Placentia, CA 92670; 714/524-5770.

inTalk Update

Palantir has released inTalk (version 3.0), a desktop telecommunications program for the Macintosh.

In addition to file transfer with handshaking and filter options, inTalk supports binary file-transfer protocols, such as MacBinary for Macintosh files, XMODEM for non-Macintosh files, CrossTalk for MS-DOS personal computers, Yterm protocol for IBM mainframes and inTalk for unattended Macintosh file transfers. It also supports high speed error-correcting modems and file transfers with MacTerminal programs. The retail price is $195. Registered users can upgrade for $50.

For information, contact Palantir, 12777 Jones Rd., Suite 100, Houston, TX 77070; 713/955-8880.

TeleCommand

TeleCommand from Computer Solutions International enables anyone with a Touch-Tone telephone to have a two-way phone conversation with an IBM PC or compatible computer.

TeleCommand converts telephone Touch Tones into any keystrokes available on a computer keyboard. The voice technology incorporated into the product provides a natural replacement for the computer monitor. It can read back to the caller any text displayed on the screen using either a synthesized voice or a user's own digitized voice. Retail price is $1,495.

For information, contact Computer Solutions International, 7171 Torbram, Unit 4, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada L4T3W4; 416/671-4155.

SupraModem 2400

Supra Corp. has introduced SupraModem 2400, a Hayes-compatible modem that sells for $179.95.

The unit is compact and supports asynchronous operation at 300, 1200 and 2400 baud. User configurations are created by issuing simple commands, which eliminate troublesome DIP switches. Configurations can then be stored in the modem's non-volatile memory so they are automatically loaded every time the modem is turned on or reset. Features include auto-answer/auto-dial, two modular phone jacks and a programmable-volume speaker.

Software packages are also available with the SupraModem 2400 for the Atari ST, Atari XL/XE, Commodore 64/128, Amiga and Macintosh.

For information, contact Supra Corp., 1133 Commercial Way, Albany, OR 97321; 503/967-9075.

Go Online for More Product Announcements

The following new product announcements are available this month in *Online Today Daily Edition* by typing GO OLT-250 at any CompuServe Information Service prompt.

The Text Collector, *software for the IBM PC and compatibles that allows users to find, collect, examine and analyze scattered blocks of text, O'Neill Software.*

MacDraw II, *new version of the object-oriented drawing applications tool for the Apple Macintosh, Claris Corp.*

Adobe Illustrator 88, *graphics production tool, Adobe Systems Inc.*

Bookmark, *disaster recovery software for the Apple Macintosh Plus and SE, Intellisoft.*

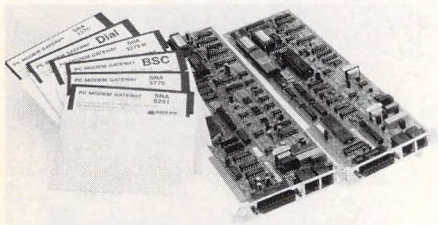
MacWrite (version 5.0), *enhanced version of word processing software for the Apple Macintosh.*

Publishing Companion, *translates WordPerfect documents into TeX (a typesetting language), K-Talk Communications.*

STB RapidRAM, *2MB memory adapter for the IBM PS/2 Models 50 and 60, STB Systems Inc.*

MasterDrive, *external 5¼-inch disk drive for the IBM PS/2 series of computers, MicroPlot Systems Co.*

Touchstone 3 Keypad, *a 22-key numeric keypad for portable computers, Touchstone Technology Inc.*



Modem Gateways

A new line of money-saving PC Modem Gateways from Black Box Corp. combines all the modem and conversion options needed by IBM PC, PC-XT, PC-AT and compatible computers for SNA or BSC protocol conversions onto one card at half the normal cost.

The Black Box 201C PC Modem Gateway sells for $625 and the BSC software retails for $270. Gateways can be installed in the PC expansion slot.

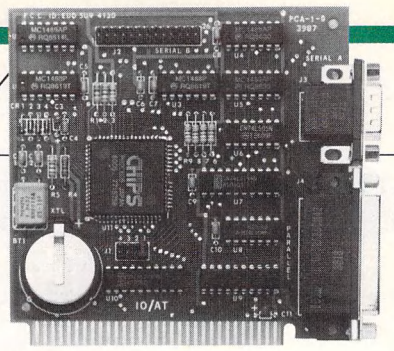
For information, contact Black Box Corp., P.O. Box 12800, Pittsburgh, PA 15241; 412/746-5500.

Adventure Games

Firebird Licensees has introduced two adventure games: *Silicon Dreams* and *Jewels of Darkness*.

The new titles consist of three smaller adventure games. *Silicon Dreams* casts the gamer as a colonizer of the planet Eden in the 23rd century. *Jewels of Darkness* takes place in the "Land of the Demon Lord." Both are available for the Commodore 64/128, Atari 8-Bit and the Apple II series for $24.95. Versions for Amiga, Atari ST, IBM PC and Macintosh computers sell for $29.95 each.

For information, contact Firebird Licensees Inc., 71 N. Franklin Turnpike, Waldwick, NJ 07463; 201/444-5700.



I/O Board

The IO/AT from Boca Research is a quality, low-cost input/output adapter that can provide up to eight serial ports in one system.

The unit uses the latest in custom chip technology, which facilitates installation procedures and omits the need to set jumpers or switches. It provides IBM PCs and true compatibles with a 25-pin parallel port, a nine-pin serial port and an optional 25-pin serial port. Using the AT-type high-speed UART, both serial ports provide a transfer rate up to 56,000 baud. Retail prices range from $119 to $139.

For information, contact Boca Research Inc., 6401 Congress Ave., Boca Raton, FL 33487; 305/997-6227.

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List them all or scan for specific subjects
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Lola,
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Forest

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Online Inquiry is *Online Today*'s electronic version of the traditional reader inquiry card. To request additional information about products or services described in *Online Today*, simply access CompuServe and type GO OLI at any prompt.

CompuServe Page OLI-1
ONLINE TODAY ADVERTISERS
ONLINE INQUIRY (OLI)
1. OLI Instructions
2. Online Today Display Ads
3. Print Edition Reviews
4. Shopper's Guide Mini-Ads

Display Ads

GO OLI-160. Inquiries to this section will be followed by a brief description of the *Online Today* ad. To request additional printed information, simply enter your name and address at the prompts. OLI will add your User ID number and electronically forward your request to the appropriate advertiser(s). The names, addresses and User ID numbers will also be forwarded via US Mail at the end of each month.

CompuServe Page OLI-160
ONLINE TODAY ADVERTISERS/OLI
1. April 1988 Advertisers
2. Mar. 1988 Advertisers
3. Feb. 1988 Advertisers

Editorial Articles/Reviews

At the end of each electronic version product review, you'll be asked if you wish to request further information through the Online Inquiry system. A "yes" response will let the system prompt you for your name, address and other information so that your request can be forwarded to the appropriate company. If you respond "no," the system will return you to the previous menu.

To request information about products reviewed in the print edition, go to page OLI-280 and select the appropriate listing, such as April Hardware Reviews. At the next menu, select the product you're interested in. If you answer "yes" at the question prompt, the OLI system will prompt you for the necessary information.

Requests to these sections will be stored and forwarded by traditional mail once each month.

CompuServe Page OLI-280
REVIEW LISTINGS/PRINT EDITION
1. April Hardware Listings
2. April Software Listings
3. April New Product Listings

Shopper's Guide

GO OLI-70 to get information about *Online Today*'s mini-ad program.

To request information from Shopper's Guide advertisers, follow the instructions outlined in each ad.

CompuServe Page OLI-70
SHOPPER'S GUIDE
1. About Shopper's Guide
2. Rates and Information

***Note:** Additional requests during the same session will not require you to re-enter your name and address.

New Tax Law TIP

To help you understand the new tax law, the IRS has two new publications. **Publication 920** explains changes affecting individuals and **Publication 921** explains changes affecting businesses. Both are free. Ask for one at any IRS office or call the IRS Tax Forms number in your phone book.

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April issue, not valid after July 1988.

UPDATE

New Forum Software Debuts

CompuServe's new forum software is available in the IBM Communications Forum (GO IBMCOM), Epson Forum (GO EPSON) and the Atari Developers Forum (GO ATARIDEV) and will be released to all forums next month.

Revamped menus and more intuitive commands are among the most significant changes subscribers will find in the forums. CompuServe turned to subscribers and forum administrators throughout the redesign project. "We're confident that subscribers familiar with the old software will like the new software and will find the transition smooth," says Gary Yeauger, software programmer. To ensure a smooth transition, CompuServe has updated online forum help information.

Customer Service and forum administrators can also help answer subscribers' questions and the old forum software will be available for one year. "This will give subscribers an opportunity to revise their scripts that they use to access a forum, without interfering with daily forum activities," says Donna Black, forum specialist. CompuServe continues to support commands from the old forum software that do not conflict with new software commands and a free practice area is available. GO PRACTICE

CompuServe Navigator Available

The CompuServe Navigator, version 2 of a Macintosh terminal program that allows subscribers to minimize online costs, is now available for ordering online.

This enhanced version of previous shareware versions includes new features such as support of CompuServe's enhanced B Protocol, real-time and local GIF viewing, a terminal mode and updated documentation. GO ORDER

MAUG Sponsors HyperCom Contest

MAUG is sponsoring a HyperCom Contest to encourage HyperCard development for the Macintosh. Participants can win more than $1,000 in prizes by uploading HyperCard entries to Data Library 1 of the Apple Hyper Forum with a keyword of HYPERCOM before Thursday, June 30. All entries remain the property of the programmer, and MAUG assumes no rights. GO APPHYP

Eaasy Sabre Enhances Service

Eaasy Sabre offers a simple reservation process allowing subscribers to make reservations for as many as four passengers at once and to request a flight reservation based on fare or class of service.

Subscribers may also request the cost of their itinerary anytime during the reservation process. A complete list of the rules that apply to restricted, low-price fares is also available. GO EAASY

IQuest Adds Features

IQuest, the online reference service with access to more than 900 databases, now offers multiple database scans and restructured IQuest-I menus.

Multiple database scans enable subscribers to search and retrieve references. IQuest-I menus have been reformatted to decrease the number of steps per search and new topics have been added to help define searches more accurately. GO IQUEST

Gateway Discovered on *Kesmai*

A gateway to distant lands has been discovered on the lowest level of the *Island of Kesmai*, a multiplayer role-playing game on CompuServe. This new land includes a forbidden tower, a sword of light and another gateway. The *Island of Kesmai* contains two charted regions (Kesmai and Leng) and two uncharted regions, also known as the "Advanced Game." GO ISLAND

New Merchants in The Mall

Direct Micro (GO DM) is a new Mall merchant offering microcomputer-related merchandise for online ordering. Autoquot-R (GO AQ), a division of Discount Vehicle Leasing Co., a Boston-based independent leasing company, offers custom reports on more than 1,200 vehicles—including the factory invoice price and the suggested retail price.

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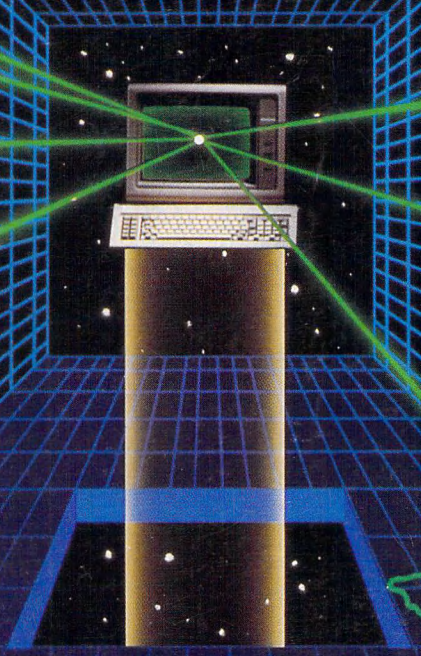

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